

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 216 581

HE 014 929

AUTHOR Weigle, Richard Daniel
TITLE Convocatam EST: Addresses by the President of St. John's College at Matriculation Convocations in Annapolis and Santa Fe Over Three Decades, 1950-1980.
REPORT NO ISBN-0-960390-4-X
PUB DATE 81
NOTE 168p.
AVAILABLE FROM St. John's College Press, Annapolis, MD 21401.
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC07 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Chinese Culture; *Church Related Colleges; *College Role; Educational Objectives; *Educational Philosophy; Females; Foreign Countries; Higher Education; *Liberal Arts; Philosophy; Small Colleges
IDENTIFIERS *Saint Johns College MD; Saint Johns College NM

ABSTRACT

A collection of brief addresses made by Richard Daniel Weigle to successive entering classes at St. John's College at matriculation convocations over three decades (1950-1980) are presented. The 25 convocation addresses concern the following topics: Plato's cave and St. John's College; history; liberal education and women; Subiaco and community; learning; questioning and belief; unity and multiplicity; heritage and liberal arts in learning; the world and the college; what is St. John's College; Annapolis and Santa Fe; the liberal arts college: anachronism or paradigm; relevance; polity; Hsun Tzu and St. John's College; Mao's cultural revolution and liberal education; Chinese higher education and St. John's College; St. John's College--past and prologue; who are the teachers; Socrates, senior tutor; Tocqueville, equality, and education; St. John's College--a revolutionary college; The Declaration of Independence; St. John's College--forty years; and in retrospect. (SW)

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CONVOCATUM EST

ADDRESSES BY
THE PRESIDENT OF ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE
AT MATRICULATION CONVOCATIONS
IN ANNAPOLIS AND SANTA FE
OVER THREE DECADES,
1950-1980

by

RICHARD DANIEL WEIGLE

THE ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE PRESS

ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND

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- p. 31. Adams, Henry, *The Education of Henry Adams*.
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Association Press, 291 Broadway, New York, 1959. Copyright by National
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- pp. 77-80, 104. Hsün Tzu, *Basic Writings*, Translated by Burton Watson.
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- pp. 41, 42. Lippmann, Walter, *The Public Philosophy*.
Little Brown and Company, Boston, 1955. Copyright by WL, 1955.
- p. 91. Sayers, Dorothy L., *The Lost Tools of Learning*.
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in *Hibbert Journal*.
- pp. 24, 25, 41, 44, 67, 68 and 111-113. Tocqueville, Alexis de, *Democracy in
America*.
Edited and abridged by Richard D. Heffner and published as a Mentor
Book, The New American Library of World Literature, Inc., 501 Madison
Avenue, New York City, 1956. Copyright by RDH, 1956.
- p. 114, 115. Van Doren, Mark, *Liberal Education*.
Henry Holt and Company, 1943. Copyright by MVD, 1943.
- p. 42. Whitehead, Alfred North, *The Aims of Education*.
Published as a Mentor Book, The New American Library of World Litera-
ture, Inc., 501 Madison Avenue, New York City, 1949. Copyright by The
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Mortimer J. Adler, Associate Editor, Encyclopedia Britannica, Copyright
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Printed in the United States of America

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FOREWORD

Convocatum Est is a collection of brief addresses made to successive entering classes at St. John's College at matriculation convocations during the three decades of my presidency. By tradition these two Latin words were pronounced at the conclusion of the proceedings. *Convocatum est*—it is convoked—meant that a new college year had begun.

It is the happy task of the president each fall to call the College together in convocation so that faculty members and the whole college community may witness the matriculation of the incoming freshmen. The occasion is a formal one. As the college bell tolls, the tutors process into the hall in full academic regalia and take their places immediately in front of the new students. The gathering is opened with the following words:

As President of St. John's College, I am calling the College together for its One Hundred and Eighty-ninth Academic Session in Annapolis and for its Sixteenth Academic Session in Santa Fe.

After the invocation the marshall calls on the new class to rise and then presents them to the dean. The dean in turn tips his cap to the president and says:

Mr. President, these young men and women desire to be made members of St. John's College. They have given evidence of their good character and their ability to undertake the tasks which we have set for them.

The president then responds:

Mr. Dean, will you present them in the presence of the Faculty and in the witness of the whole College, in order that they may complete their matriculation by signing the College Register?



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Thereupon the dean reads aloud the name of each member of the class and the place from which he or she comes. The student thus presented proceeds across the platform and bows or curtsies to the president in his capacity as head of the College. The president acknowledges this formal greeting by tipping his cap and by shaking the hand of the student. The freshman continues on to the table of the registrar, where the historic College Register is signed.

After all have been presented, it is customary for the president to give a brief address to the assembled College. He bids the newly inducted members welcome and speaks about liberal education or about the College—its history, its philosophy, its program, or its role upon the American educational scene. At the end of his address there is a short pause. Then the president solemnly says: "I declare the College in session at the conclusion of the benediction. *Convocatum est.*"

In the pages that follow are twenty-five of the convocation addresses which I gave during the 1950's, the 1960's, and the 1970's. The order is largely chronological, for there are references to major events in the life of the College, as well as to happenings on the national scene. The subject matter ranges widely—from heritage to relevance, from the Chinese philosopher Hsün Tzu to Socrates, from the Benedictines of Subiaco to Mao's Cultural Revolution, from Plato's cave and his slave boy to the Declaration of Independence. In every talk there are points of applicability to St. John's College and the task it has set for itself. If the addresses seem repetitious, it is because the audience of entering students was ever new. Since another part of the audience, the faculty members, remained relatively unchanged, I sought to repeat myself as little as possible. I hope that those who heard the addresses may gain some nostalgic pleasure from reading them. I hope that others may discover something of value about St. John's College and about liberal education as it is attempted here.

Annapolis, Maryland
May 20, 1981

RICHARD D. WEIGLE
President Emeritus

PLATO'S CAVE AND ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

Gentlemen of the Class of 1954, on behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors, the faculty, and the student body of St. John's College, I welcome you. You are now full-fledged members of this venerable institution, whose origins are among the finest traditions of colonial Maryland. Yet it is an institution which proudly proclaims a new and challenging educational program peculiarly suited to the national needs of the hour.

Plato was deeply concerned with education. In the *Republic* he likens the uneducated masses of men to prisoners, chained and immobile in an underground cave, with a fire behind them. For the men the only reality is the shadows thrown by the fire on the wall in front of them and the echoes reflected by the wall. The long and painful ascent out of the cave into the light of the sun is Plato's metaphor for the hard upward journey of the soul into the intelligible sphere, where it finally sees the Form of the Good, itself the giver of the good, the true, and the beautiful.

For Plato, then, education was not putting knowledge into the empty souls of men, for in each soul there was already a faculty and an instrument of learning. Education was rather the art of conversion or turning the soul around so that it would leave the world of shadows and unreality and be oriented toward the Good, toward truth and reason.

During these next four years at St. John's College you will experience this turning about of your souls. The rigors of Euclid in the mathematics tutorial, the intricacies of Greek grammar in the

language tutorial, the performing of Harvey's experiments in the laboratory, and the seminar discussion of tragedy in *Macbeth* or the philosophy of Kant's *Critique of Pure Reason*—all these will conspire together to help bring about this new orientation. You will approach the baffling and compelling questions of all time. For some you may find answers. The answers to others will continually elude you. There will be periods of hard labor and of complete frustration. Yet there will also be moments of revelation and achievement, when you will more than glimpse the sun outside the cave. And eventually I hope you will emerge as educated men, loath to return to the darkness from which you escaped.

But this is not enough. Let us carry the analogy further. The philosophers of Plato's *Republic* cannot bask forever in the liberty attained at such great price. They may not continue indefinitely the process of education or the contemplation of its delights. They must descend to the prisoners in the cave, share with them their life, but at the same time seek to turn them around and start them on the upward ascent. The philosophers must contribute their advantages to the community so that the whole may prosper.

Nor may you live for long in ivory towers, alluring as that prospect may appear after some months of college life. Rather, four years from now, or after graduate school, it will be incumbent upon each of you to bring your newly acquired arts to bear upon tangible, concrete problems in a world of confusion and disillusionment. Many of you will find your careers in the professions—divinity, law, medicine, and teaching, but you must eschew the role of the perennial graduate student. A large number of you, I hope, will turn, as have your predecessors at St. John's, to government service, labor union leadership, farming, and business. More than that, you must demonstrate a willingness to serve your fellow citizens in community chests, parent-teacher associations, and organizations for civic improvement. You must likewise be prepared to endure the unpleasantness of standing for election to public office. Otherwise your years here at St. John's will prove a selfish if not futile experience.

An art sorely needed today is the art of thinking. Amid conflicting claims of ideologies, blaring broadsides of propaganda, and irresponsible demagoguery, citizens must be able to think for themselves and reach right decisions. I hope that you will not

remain aloof from the noisy and disturbing world. I hope rather that you will become sources of strength in your respective communities, men trusted and respected for wise counsel and devotion to your fellows. And as you enter the strife of the market place, I hope you will find effective the inner resources which St. John's seeks to develop within each of you. I hope you will be free and rational men with an understanding of the basic unity of knowledge, an appreciation of our common cultural heritage, and a consciousness of social and moral obligations. I bid you Godspeed as you chart your way over the four years ahead.

* * *

I declare the College in session at the conclusion of the benediction.

Convocatum est.

HISTORY

Members of the Class of 1956, you have now joined that long roster of names in the Register of St. John's College—a roster which begins in the early days of our Republic. On behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors and of the faculty I bid you welcome to this our community of learning. We hope that you will find our common experiences ahead both stimulating and rewarding. We hope that you too will cherish this College and give freely of yourselves, that our project of learning may prosper.

That you may know something of the history and background of this institution which will be your home for the next four years, I shall bring you certain historical facts this afternoon. My purpose is to develop in each of you some sense of consciousness of the long tradition of learning at St. John's. It seems to me most appropriate that this pilot college in liberal arts education in the United States should at the same time be the third oldest institution of higher learning, tracing its history back to its founding in 1696 as King William's School.

Early in the year 1785 the General Assembly of the State of Maryland passed "An Act for founding a College on the Western Shore of this State and constituting the same, together with Washington College on the Eastern Shore, into one university by the name of the University of Maryland." This project had been proposed as early as 1732, but nothing had come of the various efforts to found a college in Annapolis. We know that a bill in 1761 was defeated through the efforts of the delegates from the Eastern

Shore. That bill, incidentally, would have financed the new college by a tax on tavern licenses, wheel carriages, slaves, Irish papist servants, and bachelors!

On November 11, 1789, a distinguished procession moved from the State House down North Street to the new campus, and St. John's College was officially opened. Its aim was "the liberal education of youth in the principles of virtue, knowledge, and useful literature," that there might be trained and perpetuated "a succession of able and honest men for discharging the various duties of life, both civil and religious, with usefulness and reputation." Its founders included Samuel Chase, Thomas Stone, Charles Carroll of Carrollton, and William Paca, all of them signers of the Declaration of Independence and all active in the establishment of the young Republic. Its charter, from which I have quoted, was the first in the United States to prohibit religious discrimination. One interesting and now I fear somewhat archaic provision exempted both faculty and students of the College "from all rates and taxes on their salaries and from all military duty except in the case of an actual invasion of the State and when general military law is declared." This is now small comfort to the student negotiating with a local draft board or to a faculty member facing the Ides of March.

Originally, the college curriculum consisted of a three-year course to which a student might be admitted if he had mastered writing and arithmetic, Greek and Latin. The Noviciate Class, as freshmen were termed, studied Livy, Xenophon, Plato, Euclid, Algebra, Plane and Spherical Trigonometry, Logic and Metaphysics. Once a month they indulged in syllogistic disputations. The juniors studied, among other subjects, Introduction to Rhetoric, Aristotle's *Poetics*, Surveying, Principles of Navigation, Fortification, Conic Sections, and Forensic Disputation. The seniors then qualified for the degree of Bachelor of Arts by suitable immersion in Moral Philosophy, Epictetus, Introduction to Civil History, Astronomy, Use of the Celestial Globe, and Sketch of Natural History.

The College had commenced its existence with only this building, now known as McDowell Hall after the College's first president, Dr. John McDowell, plus extensive woodlands and pastures, sold in 1845 as part of the site for the United States Naval Academy. It was not until 1838 that Humphreys Hall was con-

structed by the president whose name it now bears. The Reverend Hector Humphreys was a builder. His initial project, however, was prompted by disciplinary problems. He found that students were going to frequent balls in town, that some brandished canes against the citizenry, and that many were repeatedly guilty of staying out later than nine o'clock at night. His solution was to construct a dormitory and introduce compulsory on-campus housing, a custom which has persisted to this day. Mr. Humphreys planned to lock his dormitory at nine o'clock each evening, secure in the knowledge that his charges would be safe from the temptations of urban Annapolis. But he forgot that the building had windows! Parenthetically, his next solution was a ten-foot wall to encircle the campus. Fortunately, however, he could never find the requisite money. Instead he built Pinkney Hall and what are now known as Paca-Carroll and Chase-Stone Houses.

At this point the War between the States erupted and the College campus was turned into a receiving station for southern prisoners of war. They were processed at St. John's and then sent out to a camp west of Annapolis, called Camp Parole. The first post-war president was Henry Barnard, who soon left St. John's to become the first United States Commissioner of Education in Washington. Instability followed in the affairs of the College until 1886, when Dr. Thomas Fell, a young Englishman, became president. During the thirty-seven years of his administration the College engaged in a program of compulsory military training. The cadet corps was of such excellence that the War Department selected St. John's as one of six leading military colleges of the country and gave direct commissions to its graduates. Like President Humphreys, Fell was a builder and added to the campus, around the turn of the century, Woodward Hall, Randall Hall, and Iglehart Hall, the gymnasium.

There followed a succession of administrations, during the first of which the military program was abandoned in favor of the elective liberal arts curriculum so characteristic of American colleges and universities in this century. This was the period of St. John's athletic greatness, when its lacrosse teams won two national championships and its football teams struggled against the might of West Point and New York University. It was also a period of financial difficulties, induced in part by the depression, but also by a scheme for buying up colonial properties in the city of Annap-

olis. By the middle of the 1930's the College was practically bankrupt; its accreditation had been lost; and it appeared likely that St. John's would become an educational casualty.

Meanwhile, at the University of Chicago, President Robert Hutchins had obtained a grant from the Rockefeller Foundation to gather a group of educators to study the ideal curriculum for a liberal arts college. Unpredictably, President Hutchins and the Board of Visitors and Governors of St. John's College were brought together, and in the summer of 1937 two members of his study group, Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan, came to St. John's as president and dean to institute the curriculum under which you will study. This curriculum is in effect a modern equivalent of the old liberal arts curricula of the early days of this Republic. It combats the contemporary trend toward specialization and emphasis upon subject matter as such. Instead it seeks to develop the mind of a man so that he is best equipped to undertake any vocation or profession and so that he can live his life most fully and meaningfully.

This program is now fifteen years old and has proven its effectiveness in the records of the two hundred fifty men who have graduated during that period. They have entered upon a wide range of careers and seem to have acquired those qualities of mind which mark the educated man. In addition, St. John's has influenced the educational thinking of the nation through its contributions to the Harvard report called *General Education in a Free Society*, a volume which has modified the curricula of many colleges and universities in the direction of what is termed general education and away from premature and excessive specialization.

To you members of the Class of 1956 now belong the rich historical heritage of St. John's and its challenging concept of education, which is after all not new but finds its prototype in the liberal arts education of our forefathers. We await eagerly the freshness and the vigor which you will bring to our discussions. We anticipate that in our learning together we will all, tutors and students alike, approach nearer to our goal of the True and the Good. I bid you Godspeed.

LIBERAL EDUCATION AND WOMEN

Members of the Class of 1955, you have now inscribed your names in the historic Register of St. John's College, and I welcome you, on behalf of the faculty and students, to our community of learning. You will find that we are all learners together in the pursuit of truth, distinguished one from the other only by the degree of aptitude and experience. Your education here depends only upon the extent of your participation in the learning process. I hope that you will be astute enough to recognize the goal early in our four years together, so that we do not have to part company somewhere along the way.

You have come to a venerable institution, one which boasts of its colonial origins in the founding of King William's School in 1696. Only Harvard and William and Mary antedate it. The establishment of Lord Baltimore's colony at St. Mary's City had taken place but sixty-two years earlier. Life in Annapolis was relatively simple, with tobacco and shipping preoccupying most of the citizenry. There were in all less than forty dwellings, and of course no one was even to dream of the Naval Academy for another one hundred fifty years.

The School was chartered by his Majesty William III "for the propagation of the gospel, and the education of the youth of this province in good letters and manners." It was to be a "free school," with a curriculum of "Latin, Greek, writing, and the like." Its faculty was to consist of "one master, one usher, and one writing-master, or scribe." The School building itself stood inside what is now State Circle at the head of the little street which leads to Church Circle and to which the School gave its name. For six

years the General Assembly itself used the red brick school building part of each year, and only with great reluctance did the colonial legislators settle the School's bill for £ 180 rent in 1706.

St. John's College was finally chartered in 1785 by the General Assembly of the new State of Maryland. It inherited the property, funds, masters, and students of King William's School. First principal of the College was Dr. John McDowell, and among the first Visitors and Governors were three signers of the Declaration of Independence—Samuel Chase, Thomas Stone, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. From those early days forward there have been interesting connections between the College and the history of this nation. The records tell of visits to the campus by President Washington and the Marquis de Lafayette, the former to see his stepgrandson, who was a student at St. John's. During the War between the States the college buildings were utilized for the most part by the Union armies as a receiving station for prisoners of war, who were then sent on to Camp Parole.

In addition to Francis Scott Key, the roster of St. John's alumni includes William Pinkney, United States Attorney General and Minister to England and Russia; Reverdy Johnson, United States Senator, Attorney General, Minister, and Ambassador; John Peace and Richard Randall, both Governors of Liberia; William Grayson, Benjamin Ogle, and James Thomas, Governors of Maryland; and Summerfield Tuck, Alabama Claims Commissioner and Judge in the Court of International Claims at Alexandria. For the thirty-seven years that St. John's was a military college, men were commissioned directly into the armed forces of the United States. Among the graduates of this period are many admirals and generals who distinguished themselves during the recent war.

It is remarkable that an institution as rich in tradition as this College should now be the scene of such an important and vital development in education in this country. Conceived at the University of Chicago in the middle of the 1930's, the St. John's curriculum represented in many ways a return to the classical curriculum of the past, but included among the liberal arts the study of the physical and biological sciences. St. John's became the chief protest against the vocationalism and specialization which had fragmented our colleges and universities and made it hard for college graduates to communicate with one another.

With the introduction of the new curriculum on the St. John's campus by Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan in 1937, a



tremendous ferment began in the educational world. This produced in due course the famous Harvard report, *General Education in a Free Society*, which sought in some way to reconcile the desperate need for education of young men and women in the liberal arts with the pressures of modern society for vocational training. The modifications in the curriculum at Harvard, Yale, Princeton, and many other institutions attest to the efficacy of the idea which found its first and fullest practical expression here on this campus. You are now part of this new and challenging tradition, and I know that you will share our pride in it.

This fall we demonstrate once more our willingness to break with long-standing tradition when principle makes it desirable. For the first time in two hundred fifty-five years one half of the entering freshman class appear to have been born daughters instead of sons. In spite of the fact that you young women may at the moment be the cynosure of photographic and reportorial attention, I can assure you that you will be accorded no special privileges or suffer discriminations. If the freshness of the paint in your rooms or the alleged thickness of your mattresses appear to give you any minor advantage over your fellows, I would temper your enthusiasm by reminding you that culinary odors have a way of penetrating upper floors and by informing you that the windward side of Randall Hall was once so cold that students sought warmth from a bonfire in the third floor hall!

We at St. John's believe that a true education in the liberal arts should be just as valid and profitable for a woman as for a man. Plato was the pioneer in this field. In the fifth book of the *Republic* he claimed that "there is no special faculty of administration in a state which a woman has because she is a woman, or which a man has by virtue of his sex, but the gifts of nature are alike diffused in both; all the pursuits of men are the pursuits of women also." From all this he concluded that "the same education which makes a man a good guardian will make a woman a good guardian; for their original nature is the same." I would go a step further and predict that the education offered at St. John's will be the better for the participation of women.

As the first class under this new dispensation you have a special responsibility and opportunity. I have confidence in your ability to acquit yourselves creditably, and I wish you well in the four years that lie ahead.

SUBIACO AND COMMUNITY

This summer the St. John's Seminar-in-Europe traveled fifty miles east from Rome into the mountain fastnesses of the Apennines to visit Subiaco. Here high above the gorge of the cascading Aniene River is the monastery founded by St. Benedict in the early part of the sixth century.

Pope Gregory the Great writes that Benedictus was a son of the patrician house of Ancius in Rome. When only fourteen years of age he resolved to renounce the world and live the life of a hermit. His refuge for three years was the cave at Subiaco. Each day he received a loaf of bread from the monk, Romanus, who lowered this meal to him on the end of a cord. Temptations beset Benedict as memories crowded in upon him in his solitude. Soon, however, he began attracting other men of God, who persuaded him to assume the leadership of a nearby monastery at Vico Varo. This experiment failed because of Benedict's extreme austerity, but soon thereafter a group of small monasteries grew up around his grotto retreat at Subiaco, and he found himself the abbot or superior of a considerable community of cenobites.

Here at Subiaco, and later at Monte Cassino, Benedict founded the order and the rule that were to bear his name. From the beginning the Benedictines had a reputation for concerning themselves with education. Many Roman parents entrusted their children to the monks in the hope that they would grow up in the service of God. Once in the monastery, they lost all marks of rank and wealth. All shared equally in the life and discipline of the community.

Matriculation Convocation, September 26, 1954

As we walked through the cloisters and library of the convents of St. Benedict and St. Scholastica at Subiaco, where western monasticism was born, I was impressed by the sense of community which seemed to animate the monks. It occurred to me that this religious community bore many similarities to the community of learning which is St. John's College. This is the thought I should like to pursue with you this afternoon.

At the outset let me assure all wondering neophytes of the Class of 1958 that they should have no illusions about St. John's being a monastery. True, you may discover an occasional fellow student whose coarse homespun may seem to border on the ascetic. You may find other individualists who seek vainly to emulate the burgeoning facial adornment of the razorless hermit. On the other hand, the abundance of food upon the Randall board, the pleasant companionship of the opposite sex, and the relative absence of common property should convince you that our life together here is hardly a monastic one.

First of all, at Subiaco one was conscious of tradition—the tradition of the Benedictine Order, founded over thirteen hundred years ago. Men trained in these monasteries have gone out over the centuries, not only as monks and missionaries of the gospel, but also as doctors, lawyers, teachers, historians, and poets of the western world. One senses that the monks at Subiaco find strength and inspiration from the tradition in which they stand.

We at St. John's College similarly have a great tradition, the like of which few other colleges in the United States can boast. St. John's dates back to the days of colonial Maryland, when King William's School was chartered by the Crown in 1696. This, our oldest building, was originally designed as a royal governor's mansion around 1740. In its time it afforded hospitality to Washington and Lafayette. Four signers of the Declaration of Independence were among the original founders of the College. Francis Scott Key was an early graduate and the founder of the St. John's Alumni Association. In truth, graduates of this College have, in the words of the Charter, discharged "the various offices and duties of life, both civil and religious, with usefulness and reputation."

This is part of the St. John's tradition, but there is another and even more important tradition of which you are the inheritors. It is a tradition which you share with the monks of Subiaco. It is the

tradition of Western thought dating back to the Greeks, the Hebrews, and the Romans. As you read some of the greatest books in that tradition throughout your four years at St. John's, you will in some measure capture for yourselves a sense of belonging to this tradition. The going may be tough at times, but I promise you that your lives will be more significant and meaningful for having made the effort.

A second characteristic which impresses a visitor at Subiaco is the singleness of purpose of these monks. Benedict himself sought to reform a monasticism which had been corrupted in the East and gave evidence of decay in the West. It was a time of disruption and invasion in the Empire and of disorder and irregularity in the Church. The Rule which he laid down stressed action or labor and obedience. Benedict considered it only "a little beginning, a modest introduction to Christian perfection." But the sense of mission has continued among the monks to the present day.

We at St. John's are likewise animated by a sense of mission. Ours is an educational mission, whereas Benedict's was religious. But like Benedict we are in the forefront of a struggle for reform and restoration of principle. We believe that education in this country has all but abandoned the liberal arts which all men and women should cultivate before they undertake the particular arts or skills of their future callings. We believe that the vast structure of administration, departments, course requirements, and extra-curricular life has obscured the real purposes and functions of our colleges and universities. We believe that the development of the student's intellectual powers is more important than overtaxing the memory with facts however impressive. We believe that the St. John's program is peculiarly effective at this task of training the student's mind, though, like St. Benedict, we would claim it to be "only a beginning." We are all learners together—faculty and students alike. Ours is a singleness of purpose. The very force of our conviction provides almost a missionary zeal as we confront the educational world around us. We believe that we have already contributed, albeit modestly, to reform long overdue.

There is another point of similarity in the separation from the world of the two communities that are St. Benedict's and St. John's. The monks at Subiaco live behind their monastery walls, following the strict regimen of their rule and maintaining rela-

tively little contact with the world outside of their rocky valley. The aim of a monk has always been to withdraw as much as possible from temporal things so that he would not be distracted in his approach to God. Wrote Benedict in the preamble to his Rule:

When a man has walked for some time in obedience and faith, his heart will expand, and he will run with the unspeakable sweetness of love in the way of God's commandments. May He grant that, never straying from the instruction of the Master, and persevering in his doctrine in the monastery until death, we may share by patience in the sufferings of Christ, and be worthy to share together his kingdom.

At St. John's College there is by design a measure of insulation of the student from the contemporary world around him. We are not afraid of being called an ivory tower, for the student is here passing through a four-year chrysalis period when his mind is growing and developing and maturing. To confront that mind prematurely with problems of the United Nations or slum housing or gubernatorial politics is to distract it from its fundamental task of learning. Obviously, complete insularity is neither possible nor desirable. Time, however, is short, and the four years ahead will never be duplicated in the leisure which you will have for learning. You are encouraged, therefore, to make optimum use of this period of withdrawal from the world, though I must caution you now that your education at St. John's will avail nothing if it does not impel you after graduation to enter into the affairs of the market place and to take your rightful place among your fellow citizens.

Finally, the visitor to Subiaco receives the impression that every member of the community is working together for the general welfare of the group. Benedict required seven hours of work a day, as compared with two hours of reading. One observes monks sweeping the floors, tending the gardens, repairing the buildings, and performing multifarious duties. The schedule of the day is meticulously delineated by seven services of prayer when the whole community chants together its psalms. The convents of Subiaco are in a real sense of the word communities.

St. John's College is a community, not a religious community, but a community of learners. Faculty members and students alike

are learners, though the tutors bring to the common effort more highly trained minds, greater experience and maturity, and, I hope, more than a modicum of wisdom. Competition does not characterize our community, for there can be no competition where learning is concerned. Rather, all members of this community, like the Benedictine monks, stand ready to help one another toward understanding. We are a little red school house where the teacher and all the pupils have certain responsibilities to those above or below them in the learning process. Learning at St. John's is truly a cooperative enterprise, and that is the way it should be. Moreover, learning at St. John's is the central point of focus for all phases of the life of the community. Together we engage in sports and a wide range of other extra-curricular activities. Yet each of these is consciously related to the single purpose of learning, which binds all members of the community together.

Members of the Class of 1958, on behalf of your fellow students, aged from sixteen to sixty, I extend a warm welcome to this our community of learning. I bid you Godspeed for the four years which lie ahead. May they become a promising commencement of your education.

LEARNING

St. Johns College is a community of learning. The tutors and students who compose this community are all learners, differing one from the other in degree of experience, maturity, and understanding. Each is an individual, with his or her own particular background and traits, interests, and aspirations. Yet all this diversity is somehow merged in the common life which we share on this campus.

Each year a new generation of young men and young women undertake their transient four-year membership in this community, which is indeed both homogeneous and heterogeneous, changeless and yet constantly changing. As we mark the accession of the Class of 1960 to our numbers I propose that we address ourselves to the common goal of learning which unites us, that we may more clearly appreciate our task.

What then is learning?

Schools and universities in all times and in all countries have been concerned with this process known as learning. To many students it has appeared to be the arduous activity of memorization. Learning meant storing up facts and figures ranging from the multiplication tables to a compilation of philosophical systems. Such learners seem naively to attribute to the brain limitless retentive powers as well as the automatic and effortless selectivity of a business machine.

To other students learning has seemed a quantitative process. By occupying seats in successive school rooms over successive

years and by enduring successive courses or units of credit imparted by successive teachers, good, bad, and indifferent, learning would inevitably occur. Evidence of such learning was manifest in the certificate of graduation, the transcript of grades, and the college diploma. Learning seemed a process of passive absorption which would necessarily take place provided the appropriate period of time were served. Such learners seem naively to attribute to the teacher pedagogic powers of an almost magical nature, to say nothing of the patience of Job.

The learning of this community is different from either of these conceptions. It is neither the storing up of a reservoir of knowledge nor the passive submission to the ministrations of a faculty. It is instead an active and immensely difficult undertaking by each individual. It aims at the development of certain intellectual skills or arts, which have been known from time immemorial as the liberal arts. It aims as well at the acquisition of certain understandings, which men have sought for in all ages. These are the fundamental understandings of self, fellow men, the world around us, and the God who guides our destinies.

Learning must always be an individual matter, yet in a community like this tutors and students assist each other through the techniques of questioning, clarifying, defining, and discussing. This interaction of individual minds committed to a common task is the very spirit of St. John's College. Learning at times will be tedious and disappointing. At other times there will be moments of penetrating insight which will more than compensate for frustration.

Whether or not real learning takes place depends upon each member of this community. Within the first few weeks all of you will read one of the most famous of Plato's dialogues, the *Meno*, in which much is said about this matter of learning. Let me anticipate a bit this afternoon and describe to you the encounter between Socrates and Meno's slave boy.

Socrates has been expounding his doctrine of recollection - that is, that the soul of man is immortal and has been born and reborn many times, hence that it possesses knowledge from previous experiences on this earth, and from its life between incarnations, and that learning is therefore nothing but remembering or recollecting latent knowledge. Meno asks Socrates to prove his point, and the ignorant Greek slave boy of Meno is called in to provide

proof of Socrates' hypothesis. Socrates draws a square in the sand and joins the midpoints of each side vertically and horizontally so that the large square is composed of four small ones. His conversation with the boy begins in this manner:

"Tell me, boy, do you know that a square is like this?"

"I do."

"Now, a square figure has these lines, four in number, all equal?"

"Certainly."

"And these, drawn through the middle, are equal too, are they not?"

"Yes."

"And a figure of this sort may be larger or smaller?"

"To be sure."

"Now if this side were two feet and that also two, how many feet would the whole be?"

In this manner Socrates gets the boy to recollect that the area of the square is four square feet. He then goes on to ask the boy how to get a square which has twice the space of the square he has drawn:

"Come now, try and tell me how long will each side of that figure be. This one is two feet long: what will be the side of the other, which is double in size?"

"Clearly, Socrates, double."

By further questioning he leads the boy on to the realization that four-foot sides would result in a square of sixteen square feet. Rebuffed on his first conclusion, the boy next suggests the happy medium of three feet to a side. This similarly Socrates leads him to admit is in error, for it produces a nine-foot square. A third time Socrates asks the same question:

"So we fail to get our eight-foot figure from this three-foot line."

"Yes, indeed."

"But from what line shall we get it? Try and tell us exactly; and if you would rather not reckon it out, just show what line it is."

"Well, on my word, Socrates, I for one do not know."

This is the crucial point in the episode. The slave boy, who has twice answered confidently out of ignorance, now appreciates his difficulty and knows that he does not know. He has reached a state of genuine perplexity. Socrates has first had to give him what he calls a "torpedo's shock," causing him to doubt his unexamined

opinions and finally to recognize his lack of knowledge. The ensuing state of perplexity is not one of frustration and despair but rather an admission of error and ignorance coupled with an eagerness to inquire and learn. Once reduced to the "perplexity of realizing that he did not know," says Socrates, the slave boy "felt a craving to know," and "will push on in the search gladly, as lacking knowledge."

This little encounter in the *Meno* has considerable relevance to the process of learning at St. John's College. Each of you, like the slave boy, exhibits an assurance and a definiteness about many facts, figures, theories, and principles. Most of your opinions have been inherited from your families and associates or have been acquired from teachers in elementary and secondary schools. In relatively few cases have you critically examined them. The "torpedo shock" of the simple question "Why?" may have the most devastating results. But this is necessary. Here you must submit your beliefs and opinions to scrutiny and questioning. You must learn to adopt an attitude of scepticism and doubt until reason or faith provides the undergirding of truth. A state of honest perplexity, coupled with a "craving to know," provides the best starting point for real learning. This is the process which lies ahead of each of you. It is not easy.

At St. John's College you will work with the great tradition of Western thought as embodied in a representative group of books and documents. As the College Catalogue states, "In a way this tradition of ours is not in the books, it is rather the heritage by which we live, the spirit which permeates our thinking and speaking, our attitudes and concerns. This heritage, however, can wither away. It is necessary, then, and on more than one occasion, to go back to its sources and to reflect on what they have to say." So your task here is to question and examine that heritage, and, in so doing, to discover new meanings and a new validity for yourself and others. Such a tradition, such a heritage is never static; it is dynamic and challenging, always demanding new interpretations.

In this process of learning, however, there is the danger that constant questioning may induce a permanent state of scepticism or agnosticism, denying the ability of the human intelligence to attain to assured knowledge in any field. It is true that the mind may be insatiable in its search for additional information and

greater certainties. The fact is, however, that few of us can afford the luxury of continuing inquiry when decisions must be made on the basis of available evidence. There is no way by which one can avoid a commitment at some point in his learning. An annual essay or a thesis must be written with the facts and arguments at hand, not with those which might be discovered in another month of investigation. A career decision must be reached without further postponement, comfortable as the insulation of more graduate study may sound. A vote for president must be cast though claims and counter-claims of political parties have not been adequately appraised. The Fates are inexorable; personal decisions and commitments must be made.

My own graduate training as a historian has provided me with ample evidence of the difficulty of discerning one area of truth, that with respect to the past. At times I have found it helpful to express the dilemma of the student in terms of the mathematical formula $X \times Y$ equals C , where C is a constant representing the particular project upon which the student is embarked, X a variable representing the time and effort expended, and Y a variable representing the margin of error. As the value of X increases, that is, as more time and effort are expended in the search for truth, the size of Y decreases, that is, the size of the probable error diminishes. Or the idea may be expressed in another way by plotting the equation on a graph where the X -axis is considered to represent absolute truth. The curve described by the equation approaches closer and closer to the X -axis as the value of X increases, and yet it never quite reaches it. In other words, at a certain point, to be determined in each case, the law of diminishing returns sets in, and a decision or commitment is called for without further reduction of the margin of error.

If the very magnitude of this task of learning causes misgivings, each of you should find strength and encouragement in the liberal arts themselves. These intellectual skills which you will in some measure acquire here—in the seminars, the tutorials, and the laboratory—will increasingly aid you in your learning. They may be expected to assist you in critical analysis, logical thinking, and sound decision-making. Their discipline will free your mind for better understandings and clearer insights. They will at once be the object of your learning and the means to its attainment.

Members of the Class of 1960, I salute you. On behalf of tutors

and students alike I bid you affectionate welcome to this community that is St. John's College. May you too achieve the state of perplexity which is the beginning of learning.

QUESTIONING AND BELIEF

"I think that in no country in the civilized world is less attention paid to philosophy than in the United States." This is the indictment of Alexis de Tocqueville, astute French traveler and critic who visited Jacksonian America in 1831 and 1832, but whose prophetic words have an uncomfortable applicability to the mid-twentieth-century United States.

In spite of American disdain for the impractical speculation of philosophy, Tocqueville found "a philosophical method common to the whole people"—in his words: "To evade the bondage of system and habit, of family-maxims, class-opinions, and, in some degree, of national prejudices; to accept tradition only as a means of information, and existing facts only as a lesson to be used in doing otherwise and doing better; to seek the reason of things for one's self, and in one's self alone, to tend to results without being bound to means, and to aim at the substance through the form."

In short, he concluded that "in most of the operations of mind, each American appeals only to the individual effort of his own understanding." This situation, he believed, arose from the prevailing conditions of social equality where men lived among peers and had therefore no occasion to be influenced intellectually by clearly recognized and acknowledged superiors. In Tocqueville's words, "Every one shuts himself up in his own breast, and affects from that point to judge the world."

It is at this point in his discussion of the influence of democracy upon the action of the intellect in the United States that

Tocqueville seems to speak with particular relevance to the little republic which is St. John's College and to its role in the larger republic of the State. Let me therefore read you certain passages from the second part of *Democracy in America*:

If every one undertook to form all his own opinions, and to seek for truth by isolated paths struck out by himself alone, it would follow that no considerable number of men would ever unite in any common belief. But obviously without such common belief no society can prosper,—say, rather, no society can exist; for without ideas held in common, there is no common action, and without common action there may still be men, but there is no social body. In order that society should exist, and, *a fortiori*, that a society should prosper, it is required that all minds of the citizens should be rallied and held together by certain predominant ideas; and this cannot be the case unless each of them sometimes draws his opinions from the common source and consents to accept certain matters of belief already framed.

There is no philosopher of so great parts in the world, but that he believes a million of things on the faith of other people, and supposes a great many more truths than he demonstrates.

This is not only necessary, but desirable. A man who should undertake to inquire into everything for himself, could devote to each thing but little time and attention. His task would keep his mind in perpetual unrest, which would prevent him from penetrating to the depth of any truth, or of grappling his mind firmly to any conviction. His intellect would be at once independent and powerless. He must therefore make his choice from amongst the various objects of human belief, and adopt many opinions without discussion, in order to search the better into that smaller number which he sets apart for investigation. It is true, that whoever receives an opinion on the word of another, does so far enslave his mind; but it is a salutary servitude which allows him to make a good use of freedom.

A principle of authority must then always occur, under all circumstances, in some part or other of the moral and intellectual world. Its place is variable, but a place it necessarily has. The independence of individual minds may be greater, or it may be less; unbounded it cannot be. Thus the question is, not to know whether any intellectual authority exists in the ages of democracy, but simply where it resides and by what standard it is to be measured.

We at St. John's College are confronted with just this dilemma of investigation and questioning as contrasted with authority and belief. We are the inheritors of our Western tradition of thought which has its roots in the Hebraic-Christian religion, in Greek philosophy, and in Roman law. More recently it has received the infusion of scientific observation, experimentation, and deduction. It is our task to assimilate that tradition, to question and examine it, yet hardly to prove and demonstrate each part of it. At some point authority must intervene. At some point belief must take over in the form of a personal acceptance of, or commitment to, principle and truth.

To examine and to question are never easy, and yet this is an essential part of an education. This is the way to learn. To ask the right questions, to examine premises, to analyze problems, to define terms, to delineate alternatives, to weigh evidence, to confront contradictions, to discuss issues, to reach decisions, to affirm or reaffirm principles, and to make commitments to action—these indeed are at once the ends and the means of education. These are the liberal arts or skills, which free a person from the oppressive authority of public opinion, from mass conformity which stifles the mind. Questioning and believing must always proceed together, for one must keep on questioning, and yet at a certain point one must commit oneself if life is to be faced and lived. Furthermore, in Tocqueville's terms, the whole enterprise of questioning and learning in a community like St. John's College depends upon the willingness of its members to submit to a measure of authority. Certain principles must be accepted, certain beliefs shared, if the little republic is to continue and prosper.

In a sense this very campus provides a symbol of the dilemma which confronts us. No college boasts a finer tradition than St.



John's College, dating back as it does to 1696 when it began as King William's School. No ancient building is more revered than McDowell Hall, center of the administration and the teaching of the College since it was first given by the State in the 1780's. . . . To me this venerable old campus with its accumulated tradition represents in some way our heritage. It is stimulating to live here. It is good to be a part of it. We learn to respect it and to love it.

Now, however, we are confronted by a new force in our midst in the architectural challenge of the Francis Scott Key Memorial Auditorium and of Mellon Hall with its magnificent new laboratory facilities. Here is the antithesis to tradition in the sweeping functional lines, the imaginative use of materials, the striking blend of colors, and the spaciousness of concept. Two of the principal uses of the structures symbolize the questioning of tradition—the experimentation in the laboratory and the Friday night lecture followed by the give and take of the question period. It is my confident hope that something of a Hegelian synthesis will result. Just as the architects have succeeded so magnificently in blending the best of the contemporary with the traditional to accomplish a harmonious whole, so may St. John's tutors and students continue to hold fast to heritage and tradition while at the same time examining, criticizing, and questioning, always with the end in view of ultimate personal belief and commitment to the truth.

Members of the Class of 1962, on behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors, the faculty, and the students, I greet you and welcome you warmly to the community of learners that is St. John's College. I can but express the earnest hope that you will each achieve here the fulfillment of the educational goals which Francis Scott Key set for a college in his famous address of 1827 as he helped to found the St. John's Alumni Association:

It [education] is to give strength and preparation for the whole life. It is then that habits, principles and tastes, that fix the colour of succeeding years, are to be formed. Then are the victories to be achieved over the temper and disposition, over the temptations from within, and from without, that make the man master of himself through life. Patience in investigation, accuracy of research, perseverance in labour, resolution to

conquer difficulty, zeal in the cause of learning and virtue, are then to be acquired. Then is Science to display her charms, and Literature her delights, and a refined exalted taste to lure him, by higher gratifications, from the vain pleasures of the world. Then is he to be made familiar with the sages and heroes of antiquity, to catch the inspiration of their genius and their virtue, and the great and the good of every age and of every land are to be made his associates, his instructors, his examples.

UNITY AND MULTIPLICITY

Man is a questioning animal. Apparently it is his nature to desire to know. He wants to know certain facts, certain information, certain knowledges. At the same time he wants to know how to do certain things, how to develop and perfect certain skills. He may seek these knowledges and these skills for very practical reasons, perhaps to merge himself more comfortably and more securely in the society of his fellows, perhaps to gain personal satisfaction and power, perhaps to earn a livelihood for himself and his family, perhaps simply to ride the slow tide of inertia.

But there is another and even more important area of questioning and seeking to know. It is the search for understandings. This search means posing persistent and penetrating questions about God and His purposes, questions as to what man is and what his external relationships are, questions about the incredible world in which he finds himself, questions about the miracle of life. In this quest he hopes for understandings which will make his life more meaningful and purposeful.

In the effort to attain to understandings, no more challenging problem presents itself than that of unity and multiplicity. Or, to state it another way, is there a unifying force or thread or pattern within a world and a universe which reveal ever more diversity and complexity?

Scientists today, as never before, have begun to probe the outer reaches of our universe and have discovered galaxies and clusters of galaxies in cosmic space which stagger the imagination. George

Gamow, in his recent book *The Creation of the Universe*, seeks to establish what the age of our universe is and whether it had a beginning. He examines the age of rocks by the radioactive clock method and the age of oceans by measuring the gradual increase in their salinity. He also judges the age of the moon by its gradual recession from the earth's orbit, perhaps after its birth by breaking away from the earth in the area of the present Pacific basin. Finally he examines the age of the sun, of the stars, of the galactic clusters, and of the Milky Way.

All of these investigations point toward the evolutionary development of the universe from a certain point or beginning, which he sets at three billion years ago but which is now more accurately estimated at five billion years ago. Apparently the universe, whatever it was at that time, was caught in a great squeezing process. It was a period of "nuclear cooking" which lasted not more than an hour under conditions approximating those existing in the center of an exploding atomic bomb. Here all of the atoms of presently existing matter were formed. From this point onward the physical universe developed and expanded at a terrific rate. This rapid dispersion of our expanding universe is still going on. In Gamow's words, "it took less than an hour to make the atoms, a few hundred million years to make the stars and planets but three billion years to make man."

Such complexities, such magnitudes, and such speeds are almost beyond the comprehension of a human mind. They make the search for unity seem almost hopeless, and yet by their very nature they seem to suggest that they are explainable only in terms of a unifying force or power which is beyond man's own capacity to know.

By contrast with the universe, one finds equal complexity in the microcosm of the living cell. It is a fantastic fact that in every cell of a living organism there is a small fraction of its total atoms which order growth and the development of the living creature, which make a plant a plant, a dog a dog, or a man a man. So each living cell of a particular creature contains the same two sets of chromosomes, one from the male parent, one from the female parent, which through the relative dominance of matching genes determine the inheritance and characteristics of the new living organism. Scientists have discovered that mutations, or changes, in genes are sometimes spontaneous but can also be induced

through X-rays and other radiation. In the laboratory you will begin to approach this immensely complex problem by breeding fruit flies and by seeking to induce mutations in the rapidly multiplying generations. Here again is complexity within the smallest living organisms, complexity which seems to deny and at the same time to demand unity.

Some hundred years ago this dilemma of multiplicity and unity preoccupied a serious and thoughtful student of history, Henry Adams, grandson and great grandson of American presidents. Adams, probably one of the best educated men of his era, wrote a book about his frustrating search for education. He despaired of his college and university experience both here and abroad. He despaired of his practical experience in the literary and political worlds. He sought for a dynamic theory of history which would reconcile the conflicting forces of nature in his late nineteenth-century world, a world in which those forces were being found more complex than ever had been supposed.

Adams recalled nostalgically the golden age of the thirteenth century, when he believed that complexity had not been as great or, to state it another way, that the Church had provided unity to life in Western Europe. His symbol of this unity was the Virgin, who, he felt, had "acted as the greatest force the Western World ever felt and had drawn man's activities to herself more strongly than any other power, natural or supernatural, had ever done." By contrast, the symbol in the early twentieth century he found to be the dynamo, giant monster of man's expanding physical power. He found the seven centuries from 1200 to 1900 to be an unbroken movement from unity into multiplicity at an ever-accelerating rate. He asked whether man could come to terms with these explosive and successively larger and more complex forces of nature. Can the mind comprehend such multiplicity? Can it discover in it any unity? Is the unity at best only in the mind itself? As Adams says, "in the earlier stages of progress, the forces to be assimilated were simple and easy to absorb but, as the mind of man enlarged its range, it enlarged the field of complexity, and must continue to do so, even into chaos."

No one would deny that the acceleration of physical forces before which Adams stood in such awe has produced immensely greater complexity and multiplicity in the five decades since he wrote. If the task which he faced seemed superhuman, ours today

is even more so. To realize the truth of this one has but to fly over one of our large, sprawling industrial cities, or consider the implications of nuclear fusion and fission, or observe economic, political, and ideological forces at work upon the international scene.

If we are to seek the answer to the problem of multiplicity and unity in an infinitely complicated universe, if indeed we are to seek the answers to all manner of questions about God and man and nature, the problem is one of education. What kind of an education will train the mind of a man to search for answers to these questions and to live in the latter half of the twentieth century?

Adams, I think, had a valid conception of what education should be, in spite of his pessimistic utterances. He recognized that the forces of nature will inevitably continue to impinge upon man. He must live in the middle of them. He is in a real sense a product of them. Man himself is a force; each man exerts force upon other men. It is an immense and complicated process of action and reaction. It is unpredictable too, for no one can tell what the forces of the future are to be.

Under these circumstances, then, education cannot be a static storing of inert facts. It cannot be the assimilation of formulas to meet specific situations. Facts and formulas so learned may well be outdated by changing forces and changing circumstances even before the student has launched upon his chosen career. Education must instead be a sharpening and a developing of the mind to react - to react intelligently, imaginatively, and resourcefully to any force which may confront it. It is at this point that the liberal arts come into their own, helping man as they do to think, to reason, to figure, to experiment, to communicate, and to judge.

Adams felt that too much of contemporary nineteenth-century education wasted the energies of the mind. In his terms the object of education should be the teaching of a mind "how to react with vigor and economy." He found no stimulation in lectures. His self-examination convinced him that what his own mind needed most was conflict, competition, and contradiction. He would have begun reform of the system in his own day by setting a rival assistant professor opposite him in front of his Harvard classes. The duty of this man would be strictly limited to expressing

opposite views. This seemed to Adams the best way of stimulating and developing young minds.

Members of the Class of 1961, on behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors and the faculty of St. John's College, I greet you and welcome you to this community of learning. Here you will ask and seek to answer the unanswerable questions about God, and about man, and about nature. Here indeed you will confront complexity and multiplicity and will try to discover for yourselves the unity of an ordering force. In the give and take of seminar discussions you will converse and argue with your fellows, with your tutors, and with the great teachers of the past through the books they have written. In the tutorials and in the laboratories you will submit yourselves to the disciplines of the liberal arts, the only true path to freedom. We of the faculty pledge you our best efforts over the four years ahead. We ask you but to remember that we are learning with you and that we are all students together. Remember too that the only real education, the only real learning goes on within the mind of each individual student. It requires a desire to know and a commitment to try, but also infinite patience, diligence, and devotion along the way.

HERITAGE AND THE LIBERAL ARTS IN LEARNING

"Search for America" is the title of a series of television interviews which Huston Smith conducted for a St. Louis educational television station a year ago. In the field of education Mr. Smith interviewed Ernest William Hocking, octogenarian sage and dean of American philosophers. Professor Hocking's observations on education seemed to me particularly pertinent to our common task of learning at St. John's College. Let me quote at some length from this interview.

Mr. Smith first asks Professor Hocking whether in his opinion American students take education less seriously than their European counterparts. Mr. Hocking replies:

It has a great deal to do with our extraordinary American good fortune, and something to do with the feeling that things ought to come our way without paying the price. As we learn, perhaps through gentle humiliation or less gentle humiliation, that there is a price to be paid, education will begin to be a serious matter in America as well.

Mr. Smith responds by asking whether we take truth less seriously.

Mr. Hocking: Truth is taken less seriously, yes. It is largely regarded as a modifiable and variable thing instead of a thing which in its own nature one must

accept, must recognize. We have lived for a long time in the glorious discovery of relativity and change. But the thing that we haven't entirely settled in our own minds is that relativity implies in every case an absolute to which it is relative and that therefore with the abundance of relative truth and relative values, there is at the basis of that very relativity an absolute which does not ask our permission to be present and which does not bend itself to circumstances but which stands as something which we must recognize at the cost of simply remaining ignorant and incompetent people.

Mr. Smith: But you feel we have lost the sense of this absolute, and losing that sense makes education or the quest for truth a less serious endeavor than it otherwise would be?

Mr. Hocking: Yes. The sense of necessity is something which appears to us as a form of tyranny rather than a form of glory in the world. Necessity and tyranny apparently go together in our minds. But necessity is the light through which the hardness of the world becomes capable of mastery. It is this element of mastery through necessity that our educational processes have weakened here.

Mr. Smith: That is to say that if there were no necessary features to the world, then we could not have mastery over anything.

Mr. Hocking: Precisely.

There follows a discussion of whether every individual has a right to an education. This Professor Hocking denies, stating that education is not something to be received as a commodity or something to be used. It cannot be given to anyone, he says, apart from that person's consent and cooperation. Education in his terms is "an entering into our heritage as human beings. It is that foreshortening of the journey of the human race from primitive times to the present civilization." In Mr. Hocking's view the only obligation of society is to put before young people the means whereby they may become mature, that is, the means whereby they can undertake their own education.

The question is then asked whether education should follow the interests of the student. Hocking replies:

Interest is important but it isn't there until it is touched. A student hasn't any ready-made fund of interest which has to be consulted. The thing is that every child has an intellectual appetite until it is destroyed. The intellectual appetite is a readiness to be interested in anything that deserves interest. . . . Students want difficulties. They want the hard things. We don't believe that. It's just the characteristic of youth that it craves difficulty if it believes the difficulty is worthwhile.

Mr. Hocking then characterizes the American educational system as being too soft and too multifarious. He characterizes the period in which we live as one of "too muchness." He deplores the swelling catalogues of colleges and says that it is one of the peculiar fallacies of our time to believe that the multiplication of courses has anything to do with the value of education. "Too muchness means shallowness with regard to anything. It means the lack of the leisure and care necessary to win an honest appreciation." Colleges should therefore cultivate in their course offerings the virtue of paucity. "There are some essentials . . . some topics and themes for which there is no substitute and the whole doctrine of equivalence which has honeycombed this immense array—choosing here and there a program which would be equivalent to some other program—is one of the most pernicious fallacies of contemporary education."

After some discussion of the essential subjects of the college curriculum, Professor Hocking is asked about the likelihood that the sciences will eclipse the humanities in America. He replies:

I think there is no danger of that because the humanities are not something different from the sciences. There is no development of humanities apart from science. . . . Whatever is humanistic has to be based on a complete appreciation of the necessary tough disciplines; otherwise your humanities go astray into mere matters of delectation without substance.

Mr. Smith then poses the question whether it is possible to teach values. Professor Hocking replies that much of our teaching of ethics fails because teachers suppose their mission to be that of

converting students. Instead, he says, the teacher must bring to the attention of students

the fundamental truths that are involved in human experience, and out of that ethics will emerge, if ethics have any meaning whatever. In other words, the ethic that we teach is the ethic that has its foundation in truth and apart from that the function of the teacher of ethics is not to make men ethical but to give them that enlightenment upon their own souls which will lead them to make their ethical decisions in the light and not in the darkness. . . . It's our business to turn the light upon the nature of the student's choices and then his own ethical judgment must remain free. It must remain his own.

Finally Professor Hocking is asked to define the fundamental purposes of education as he understands it. His answer is a good subject for a seminar discussion:

To introduce a human being to the secrets of his own power to create and thereby to win through freedom, and through suffering if necessary, the will which is inseparable from all greatness, the will to create, to suffer in creation—the will to suffer in creation. Unless we have that will to suffer in creation we are unworthy to take our part in the travail of humanity.

These thoughts of Mr. Hocking's seem to have relevance to our common task of learning at St. John's College. Most of us do believe in absolute truth, elusive and challenging—truth which we can approach by reading, by dialectic, by experiment, and by faith. We recognize the presence of order and necessity in our lives and in the world around us. The freedom which we seek through the liberal arts is a freedom within the difficulty and necessity of this world. To know, to understand, and to accept the laws of nature, the limitations within which man must work, is to free a man for the best exercise of his human powers.

The St. John's program differs considerably from the three fundamental disciplines of mathematics, economics, and law which Professor Hocking would prescribe as basic for all college students. The St. John's curriculum has, however, major goals with

which I venture to suggest he would agree. On the one hand, it seeks to acquaint both tutor and student with our heritage, the accumulated knowledge and wisdom of men and women who have preceded us on this planet. Some would say that this accumulated experience of man over the ages is embodied in the humanities, that is, in the subject matter we think of as philosophy, literature, history, religion, music, and the fine arts. It is of course more than this. It is man's experience in confronting the world of nature—the natural sciences and their handmaiden, mathematics. It is also the record of men's dealings with their fellow men as embodied in such studies as anthropology, economics, government, and sociology, sometimes denominated, rightly or wrongly, the social sciences.

Whatever terms we use, whether it be knowledge, whether it be heritage, or whether it be the humanities, the sciences, and the social sciences, the goal is the same. The goal is to make man more humane, to make him broader in his understanding and in his sympathies, to free him from his ignorance and his prejudices, to provide him with an ever-widening basis for making critical judgments, in other words, to contribute importantly to his maturity.

At the same time this assimilation of man's experiences has another important result or goal. It stimulates the mind of man to creative activity. As Peter Bertocci says, "Create or die—this is the fundamental law of the universe." Creation for man, is primarily in thinking, though practical action and application may often follow. This is the activity of which he alone of all God's creatures is uniquely capable. To know what men have discovered, thought, and believed over the centuries is to stimulate one's mind to questioning, to analyzing, and to reinterpreting old truths in the light of ever-expanding and changing experiences and conditions. To assimilate this heritage without questioning and reinterpreting it is to doom it to gradual disintegration and decay. Truth is always subject to more complete understanding as man and his world change and develop over the years. The study of our heritage, then, stimulates creativity of thought, and in certain individuals this flowers to add importantly to that very heritage through a great poem, a new philosophical concept, a musical score, or a theological tenet. In isolation from one's heritage there can be little real creativity of mind.

What is the role of the liberal arts in all of this? These arts are the tools whereby man seeks to understand the accumulated experiences of the past. The liberal arts are the liberal skills, or the freeing skills, of the mind—analysis, definition, translation, deduction, demonstration, experimentation, and communication, to name a few. By them and through them man can win understanding of the universe, of man in the universe, and perhaps even of the God who created and governs it. St. John's College believes that it must prescribe a curriculum and use teaching methods which will foster the development of these liberal or freeing skills in the minds of its students. The heritage of Western man is the subject matter selected to develop the liberal arts. The liberal arts in turn are the means whereby that subject matter may be comprehended, initially only in part but later in greater degree as the student grows in understanding and maturity.

Members of the Class of 1963, this is the common task of our community. We welcome you to our number as we search for the truth. We must study and ponder the accumulated experiences of men in the past, as we strive to develop the liberal arts so necessary to gain understandings.

I would remind you that St. John's College can provide only the environment and certain of the facilities for learning. There is a campus with more than adequate living quarters, classrooms, and laboratories. There are quantities of books in the library and in the book store. There are senior fellows, your tutors, men and women whose enthusiasm for learning may spur you on the way and whose greater maturity may infuse in you a measure of wisdom.

In the end, however, learning is an individual task. It is often lonesome and frustrating; it is always difficult. Happiness does not necessarily lie at the end of this four-year road. The road is really a lifetime. Man must continue to learn and must always live a life of tension, insecurity, and perhaps even of suffering. True, there will be moments of insight and periods of illumination which will provide real recompense here at St. John's and indeed throughout life. The most important thing, however, is that man by his very nature must seek to know and to understand. We have no choice if we are to be men.

We now embark together as joint wayfarers upon this road of learning and understanding.

THE WORLD AND THE COLLEGE

Colleges open their doors this fall under the darkening shadow of possible thermonuclear destruction. All of us share the earnest hope that a war of annihilation may yet be averted at the conference table. However, any realistic view of the world scene can hardly minimize the seemingly inexorable movement of events in the direction of bristling armaments and of increasingly rigid national positions which admit of no compromise.

History is not without precedents of men who saw their peace and their way of life in gravest jeopardy. The citizens of the Roman Empire must have known that they lived a precarious existence as news arrived of the barbarian invasions. Europe of the late eighteenth century had passionate fear of the subversive doctrines of the French Revolution which threatened to engulf established monarchical institutions. The last generation watched apprehensively as Hitler and Mussolini seemed destined to bring the civilized world under the sway of fascism.

Because of the deterministic doctrine and the fanatical mission of the Soviet Union we in the West seem to have no alternative but to conduct the business of our lives amid constant tensions. St. John's College must learn to live with these tensions and must concentrate its energies on the liberal education of young men and young women. Was it not the poet Milton who, in the late seventeenth century, said that even if the French were sailing up the Thames and battering the walls of London, there should still be people engaged in quiet conversation about things of lasting importance?

Matriculation Convocation, September 17, 1961

Indeed the kind of education which St. John's stands for seems of critical priority at a time like this. If, as the Chinese were wont to say of a declining dynasty, the United States is in danger of losing "the mandate of heaven," it is only the colleges and universities of excellence which can train the intelligence that is our greatest national resource and our hope for survival. It is only the considered and thoughtful appraisal of man's ends and means that can counteract in some measure the popular American preoccupation with personal security, material well-being, and personal happiness.

Over a hundred twenty-five years ago the astute Frenchman, Alexis de Tocqueville, expressed misgivings at the trend which he discerned in this country:

The first thing that strikes the observation is an innumerable multitude of men, all equal and alike, incessantly endeavoring to procure the petty and paltry pleasures with which they glut their lives. Each of them, living apart, is as a stranger to the fate of all the rest,—his children and his private friends constitute to him the whole of mankind; as for the rest of his fellow-citizens, he is close to them, but he sees them not.

Walter Lippmann has a different analysis of the basic problem. He diagnoses "the central and critical condition of the Western society" as the eclipse of the public philosophy, the traditions of civility upon which that society was originally founded, the natural law which is "above the ruler and the sovereign people . . . above the whole community of mortals." He writes:

In the prevailing popular culture all philosophies are the instruments of some man's purpose, all truths are self-centered and self-regarding, and all principles are the rationalization of some special interest. There is no public criterion of the true and the false, of the right and the wrong, beyond that which the preponderant mass of voters, consumers, readers, and listeners happen at the moment to be supposed to want.

Lippmann here echoes the words of Montaigne, who four centuries ago complained:

'Tis a misfortune to be at such a pass, that the best test of truth is the multitude of believers, in a crowd, where the number of fools so exceeds the wise.

No lasting solution to society's ills is possible, Lippmann says, unless a way is found "to re-establish confidence in the validity of public standards."

If indeed we live in a society where truth is no longer considered to be absolute but relative and where political corruption and the breach of the law are excused because "everybody is doing it," St. John's College and all colleges share a weighty responsibility. The very fact that this faculty and I are here to witness your matriculation and to join with you in a quest for truth demonstrates that we believe the situation to be far from hopeless. Let me attempt to state what our common task is at this college and how it is related to the problems of the larger community which is the world outside.

The primary objective of the College is to develop and to mature the mind of the student in a joint enterprise of learning. This does not mean the imparting of a vast number of facts in any or all fields, facts which might anticipate some future need of the student. Alfred North Whitehead wrote in his *Aims of Education* that he had been much struck at universities "by the paralysis of thought induced in pupils by the aimless accumulation of precise knowledge, inert and unutilized." He noted that the specific details of knowledge which are important would be "picked up *ad hoc* in each avocation of life, but the habit of the active utilization of well-understood principles is the final possession of wisdom."

The crucial task is the development of the student's intellectual powers to the point where he can use them fully and freely and, through experience, begin to acquire wisdom. This entails practice in the liberal arts or liberal skills, which are the basic tools of the mind—analysis, reasoning, communication, imagination, experimentation, demonstration, decision-making, and the like. The course of study at St. John's College is designed to foster the acquisition of these liberal skills so that the mind of the student can be freed to serve him. This is attempted in certain formal ways—through reading and seminar discussion of the Great Books, through the logic and precision of mathematical exercises, through the grammar and rhetoric of language, through music

tutorials, through scientific experimentation in the laboratory, and through listening at the formal lecture.

In the last analysis it is the student and not the College that is responsible for the learning that is accomplished. Learning is a highly individual operation. All that a college can do is to provide the external conditions for such learning—classrooms, laboratories, library, and books—and a dedicated faculty who are themselves still involved in the learning venture. The rest is up to the student. He will never find himself free of tensions, even though the atmosphere of the college is conducive to learning. There will be tensions occasioned by wars and the rumors of wars, tensions arising out of family situations, tensions produced in seminars or in the confrontation of particular books. If this sounds like a gloomy prediction, let me quote from Peter Bertocci, of Boston University, who advocates insecurity as a condition for man's greatest creative activity. Bertocci says, "The best learning does not take place when you reduce the tensions."

The second responsibility of the College is to pass on to the student a knowledge of his heritage as a Western man. Only in this way can he gain perspective upon himself and his place in the scheme of things. The books which are read throughout the four years at St. John's are landmarks in the thought and discoveries of man from the Greeks and the Hebrews to the present. They are, as Robert Hutchins says a "Great Conversation" which has been going on over the past two and a half millenia having to do with man and God and the world. No man can live intelligently today without some understanding of the way in which our present concepts of government, of law, of science, of religion, and of philosophy evolved. Walter Lippmann is referring to just this when he writes about the lost traditions of civility or the forgotten public philosophy.

It is of the essence of our Western heritage that that heritage be constantly subjected to scrutiny, to questioning, and to re-evaluation. An important part of your task at St. John's will be to question what you read and, in company with your fellow students and your tutors, to discover the validity and present-day relevance of the significant ideas in the books on whatever subject. Only in this way can that tradition continue to be dynamic and vital. Inevitably you will be confronted by ideas which will contradict previously unexamined opinions and prejudices, to say nothing of

cherished beliefs. Difficult as it may be to do so, you must maintain an open mind and seek to listen to the voice of reason before either rejecting or affirming an idea.

Socrates in the *Meno* discusses the difference between right opinion and knowledge. Meno has agreed that either would serve equally well as a guide to right action and has questioned why knowledge should be the more highly prized. Socrates replies that right opinions are like the statues of Daedalus. If not tied down they are not worth much, for they may run away. Right opinions can be tethered in the mind of man and become knowledge only as he discovers the reasons for them. This is exactly your task here. This is how you will come to tell truth from falsehood, right from wrong, and knowledge from propaganda.

On the other hand, as Tocqueville points out, it is not only necessary but desirable to accept "a million of things on the faith of other people." To question everything and to keep the mind constantly in a state of suspended judgment is the way of the sceptic, the way of perpetual doubt and inaction. In the *Phaedo* Socrates deplors the loss of faith in the great disputers who claim to see the instability of all arguments:

How melancholy, if there be such a thing as truth or certainty or possibility of knowledge—that a man should have lighted upon some argument or other which at first seemed true and then turned out to be false, and instead of blaming himself and his own want of wit, because he is annoyed, should at last be too glad to transfer the blame from himself to arguments in general; and forever afterwards should hate and revile them, and lose truth and the knowledge of realities.

Conviction or commitment is a necessary concomitant to questioning.

It seems to me that you have three responsibilities in this area of commitment. First, in fairness to yourself, you must reach at least tentative decisions on most matters simply as a basis for living. These you may modify later as experience and your understanding of the truth increase. Second, while you are a student at St. John's, you must accept, in practice if not in theory, the laws and conventions within the framework of which this college exists in the Annapolis community. To do otherwise would be to put in

jeopardy our whole learning enterprise. And finally, you will brand yourself a hypocrite among your tutors and your fellow students if you profess to seek the truth and the good in seminars and then abstain from or actively obstruct the common life of the community. The College will have failed dismally unless you practice what you preach.

This then is the College's task as it seeks to fulfill its responsibilities to the Republic. We can but hope that certain minds among you will one day be capable of solving awesome political problems. We hope, however, that all of you by learning reason and seeking truth at the College will be impelled, whatever your career, to continue intellectually alive, to obey the traditions of civility, and to engage in the service of your fellows.

Members of the Class of 1965, I salute you! On behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors, the faculty, and the students, I bid you welcome to the community of learners that is St. John's College. If you apply yourselves with diligence and earnestness, I feel confident that you will successfully survive all tensions and will emerge from these portals four years hence having achieved substantial progress on the life-long road of your education.

WHAT IS ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE?

Today the College revives an old tradition in the convoking of all students and faculty members at the start of a new academic session. Some years ago limitations of space in the Great Hall of venerable McDowell caused a break in custom, and for a considerable period the matriculation convocation was confined to the members of the entering class.

As the Class of 1967 is admitted to the College, it is appropriate to pose the question: What is St. John's College? Each person may have his own answer to this question, dependent upon factors which make the College most meaningful to him. Let me suggest four possible answers this afternoon, each signifying an important aspect of this institution.

First, St. John's College is tradition. From its founding as King William's School in 1696 the College has been closely tied to the history of this state and of this nation. During the Revolution it was a gun factory, during the War between the States a receiving station for prisoners of war. Names of buildings on the campus recall historic figures. William Paca, Maryland Governor, signed the College's Charter petition. Samuel Chase, Thomas Stone, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton, the three other Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence, were on the original Board of Visitors and Governors. William Pinkney, a graduate of King William's School, served as United States Attorney General and as Minister to both Britain and Russia. It was he who drew up the declaration of war against Britain in 1812.

Matriculation Convocation, September 15, 1963

This auditorium is named for Francis Scott Key of the Class of 1796, author of the national anthem and founder of the College's Alumni Association in 1827. In his speech in St. Anne's Church on that occasion he recalled:

Thirty years ago I stood within that hall, with the associates of my early joys and labours, and bade farewell to them, to our revered instructors, to the scenes of our youthful happiness, and received the parting benediction of that beloved and venerated man who rules the institution he had reared and adorned, not more by the force of authority than of affection.

He referred to Dr. John McDowell, the first principal of the College. Key went on to write of sitting "upon the mouldering steps of that lonely portico; and beneath the shadow of that ancient tree, that seemed like me to lament its lost companions." That hall and that tree still stand one hundred seventy-one years after Key inscribed his name in the College Register.

The College's Charter called for the liberal education of youth "in order to train up and perpetuate a succession of able and honest men for discharging the offices and duties of life, both civil and religious, with usefulness and reputation." Our distinguished alumni are legion, as the Alumni Register shows. A time-hallowed campus and illustrious alumni are indeed part of the tradition which we inherit. An even more important part of that heritage is the liberal learning which persists in this institution, unaffected by the dominant tides of specialization and vocationalism so characteristic of the nuclear age. This tradition finds its origins in the Bible and in the Greek authors and philosophers. It has been called a Great Conversation, participated in by thoughtful and scholarly men and women down through the centuries. In some small way each of you is now privileged to sit at the table with Homer, Dante, Descartes, Calvin, Jefferson, and Tolstoi and carry on the dialectic in search of truth.

But St. John's is more than tradition. It is innovation and even revolution. It was St. John's College in 1937 which revolted against the permissiveness and proliferation of the elective system by carefully rethinking and reasserting the ancient goals of liberal education. The faculty of the College was able to institute the program in the liberal arts under which you will study for the next

four years. This was no slavish return to an outmoded set of courses. Instead it was the establishment of a modern equivalent of the education which the founding fathers of this republic had received—an education which recognized the primacy of language and mathematics in man's efforts to gain understanding.

Through its considerable effect upon the thinking of the authors of the Harvard report, *General Education in a Free Society*, the St. John's program has exerted a revolutionary influence upon colleges and universities throughout the length and breadth of this land. Unfortunately, the ensuing general education has not always been synonymous with liberal education in the courses required of all students. Nevertheless this little college in Annapolis precipitated helpful ferment which resulted in widespread curriculum study and revision. St. John's itself has never rested upon its curricular laurels. The introduction of the junior and senior preceptorials last year is indicative of the faculty's continuing concern to improve and perfect the learning which goes on here.

But there have been other innovations as well. In 1951 a historic decision was reached to admit women to St. John's College. By this step a masculine tradition of two hundred fifty-five years' standing was broken. Now the College is engaged upon still another venture of innovation and pioneering. Believing that a St. John's education should be made more widely available to students all over the United States and believing at the same time that the College should remain small, the faculty and the Board of Visitors and Governors voted to establish a second St. John's campus in the western half of the United States.

Santa Fe, New Mexico, was chosen as the site for the new campus, a capital city with Spanish-colonial traditions which antedate those of this British-colonial seaport. The new college buildings are now rising on the slope of Monte Sol in the southeastern corner of the city. In anticipation of sending the first cadre to New Mexico next summer, this faculty has been substantially increased for the current year. The first student has already been accepted for the Class of 1968 at St. John's College in Santa Fe. To the best of my knowledge, no other college or university has undertaken to expand its educational facilities by duplicating itself in a totally different section of the country.

In the third place, St. John's College is community. With extraordinary unanimity the Board, the faculty, and the students believe that this should be a small college affording genuine opportunity to tutor and student alike to know each other and to discourse with each other both within the classroom and outside. St. John's believes that its peculiar mission upon the American educational scene is to offer young people the option of this kind of intimate learning situation. It does not believe that a similar sense of community can exist in the same degree in an institution of a thousand students or even of five hundred students. In a real sense both tutor and student here are engaged upon a joint venture of studying and learning. This enterprise is best accomplished as both participate fully and responsibly around the table of the seminar room or around the fireplace of the tutor's living room.

This community is not a democracy. It is perhaps better described as a benevolent oligarchy, ruled over by the senior members of the community, that is, the faculty, the dean, and the president. By the terms of the College's Polity, the Visitors and Governors vest in the president responsibility for the "instruction, discipline, and government" of the College and provide that he in turn may delegate his authority. It is the dean to whom responsibility is delegated for the College's program of instruction and also for the general welfare of the students. In actual practice the instruction committee of the faculty bears with the dean responsibility for the curriculum and the instruction. The other senior members of the community, the faculty, must concur before proposals of the instruction committee become effective.

As in the case of any republic, rules and customs are necessary to assure the welfare of the whole and the rights and happiness of each member of the community. St. John's College is committed to the principles of academic freedom. This means that each faculty member and each student is encouraged to examine and explore all ideas and propositions in the common pursuit of truth. The College exists, however, within the framework of the larger communities of city, state, and nation and conforms therefore to the laws, customs, and conventions which civil society has prescribed for its own governance. St. John's College does not consider itself to be a sanctuary of safety for those who would defy the

outside world nor a place of experimentation for the development of a new moral code for the twenty-first century.

The College has sought to promulgate minimal rules with the well-being of the community at heart. I would stress again that these rules are designed, not to present an acceptable facade to the outside world nor to salve administrative conscience, but rather to create within the College those conditions under which learning is most likely to prosper. The College cherishes a goal of freedom for each individual but insists that this be the responsible exercise of freedom under law.

Finally, St. John's College is liberal learning. Its entire curriculum is conceived of as starting each individual student upon his own liberal education, that is, an education which will liberate or free him to act rationally and responsibly and to exercise his intellectual powers to the maximum. This entails first-hand acquaintance with the books which contain the long tradition of Western thought. It also entails the acquisition of tools for understanding these books and for understanding man, man's world, and his God. These tools are the arts or skills of the intellect. They are fostered in the St. John's program through discussion, translation, demonstration, and experimentation. The assimilation of facts and information can never be as important as the development of the student's thought processes. The learning at St. John's, if it is successful, lays the broadest basis for the future acquisition of more specialized skills and knowledge, but also, and even more importantly, provides the incentive and stimulus to the graduate to continue intellectually alive for the balance of his or her lifetime.

Members of the Class of 1967, I salute you. On behalf of the Visitors and Governors, the faculty, and your fellow students, I admit you to St. John's College and to the rights and privileges which are now yours. What is St. John's College? It is indeed tradition, innovation, community, and liberal learning. Perhaps no better answer can be found than in the preamble to the College's Polity, or constitution:

Education is the leading out of men from their natural state into the world of inherited customs, intellectual traditions, and spiritual ties. Institutions of learning are set up for this purpose. Beyond this they should also

seek to develop the moral and intellectual powers of men to enable them to fulfill best their freely chosen tasks and thus to take their own responsible part in shaping the future. St. John's College is a community of learning committed to hold constantly in sight this universal end and the means conducive to it.

ANNAPOLIS AND SANTA FE

Matriculation of the Class of 1968 marks a new milestone in the long history of St. John's College. This afternoon one hundred twenty freshmen from all parts of the Union have joined the notable company in the ancient College Register. Two weeks hence another eighty members of the Class of 1968 will also sign that Register on a new Western campus of St. John's College in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

These two ceremonies symbolize a new departure in higher education in this country. Over the years we have witnessed many institutional innovations, the creation of a cluster of colleges, as at Claremont, California, the establishment of branches of a university within a state, as in California or Virginia, and even the creation of foreign outposts where a year or two of specialized study abroad might be undertaken by students of such institutions as the Johns Hopkins University or Stanford University. To the best of my knowledge, however, no college of long established tradition and reputation has duplicated itself in a totally different part of the United States. This is what St. John's College has now done.

All of you, whether on the Annapolis campus or the Santa Fe campus, are alike members of St. John's College. The College, by the terms of its Charter and Polity, remains a single legal entity. Its policies are laid down by a single Board of Visitors and Governors, successors to that original group which included three Maryland

Matriculation Convocation: Annapolis, September 20, 1964
Santa Fe, October 4, 1964



signers of the Declaration of Independence, Samuel Chase, Thomas Stone, and Charles Carroll of Carrollton. Both campuses will be administered by a peripatetic president, who, I can assure you, will lean heavily upon the dean, the treasurer, and the assistant to the president on each campus. The faculty of St. John's College will continue to be a single faculty, whose members may indeed spend periods of time in teaching upon one campus or the other. Its students too will benefit from the possibility of terms of residence in two different parts of the country, though I should warn each of you that shuttling back and forth will not be considered by the faculty as a substitute for concentrated cerebration.

In truth, many of you will benefit from one or two years spent on the other St. John's campus. Such sojourn should provide stimulating variety, for in interesting ways these two colonial cities complement each other. It is true, of course, that there are many similarities. Annapolis and Santa Fe are both capitals in their respective states. Each stoutly resists the efforts of a neighboring metropolis to assume an ever increasing share of governmental offices. Both cities boast colonial traditions which their respective historical societies struggle to preserve. Both have impossibly intricate street patterns to befuddle the visiting tourist and the resident St. Johnny. Neither city boasts rail passenger service, whether on the B. and A. (The Baltimore and Annapolis) or the Atchison, Topeka and Santa Fe. But here the similarities end.

Annapolis lies in the heart of the Chesapeake Bay Country with its myriad tributaries and waterways. Much of its life today has become associated with the water. Where once clipper ships plied their routes, today one finds the boats of crabbers, fishermen, and oystermen. The mouth of the Severn River is flecked with sailboats and pleasure craft. The town itself is dominated by the mighty hulk of the United States Naval Academy, the principal economic force in the city's life. Trim uniforms and martial music remind one that this is a Navy town and a seaport and only secondarily a seat of government and a college town.

Santa Fe, on the other hand, lies high in the mountainous terrain of the Southwest, land-locked except for the meandering waters of the Rio Grande and the high reservoirs which provide the city with its water. Distance is everywhere. Brilliantly clear atmosphere brings the remote mountain ranges close. The semi-arid plains provide vivid contrast to the green trees and fields in

irrigated areas. The dominant pueblo and territorial architecture expresses the distinctive character of the city, as does its predominantly Spanish-American population. Santa Fe too is a tourist mecca, for its museums, its art galleries, its nearby skiing, its opera, and its neighboring Indian pueblos.

The two St. John's campuses are vastly different. The thirty-five acres in Annapolis were a grant from the State of Maryland. In the center of the college green stood the unfinished Royal Governor's mansion, now stately McDowell Hall, distinguished by its Georgian colonial architecture, its cupola bell tower, and its handsome brick walls. The campus, except in this year of drought, is lush green. Its giant trees are old, chief among them the tulip poplar known as the Liberty Tree. This was the tree about which Francis Scott Key wrote when he returned to Annapolis in 1827, some thirty years after his graduation from St. John's College. He spoke of sitting "upon the moldering steps of that lonely portico and beneath the shadow of that ancient tree that seemed like me to lament its lost companions, and dreams of other days came over me."

By contrast with the lush foliage and the watery reaches of the Chesapeake Bay, the Santa Fe campus of St. John's College is high, some seventy-three hundred feet above sea level on the northern slope of Monte Sol, the Sun Mount. Here are two hundred sixty acres of small hills covered with piñon pines and junipers. The air is dry and clear. The site affords a commanding panoramic view stretching from the Sandia Mountains sixty miles to the southwest past Los Alamos on the side of the Jemez Range, north to the ski slopes of the nearby Sangre de Cristos, southernmost of the Rockies. The college buildings follow a modified territorial style of architecture, with brown stucco walls, brick cornices, interesting iron balconies, and long covered walkways or portals.

Here a British colonial college meets the culture of the Southwest. Here one finds Pueblo Indians in their villages along the Rio Grande, Santo Domingo Pueblo, Cochiti Pueblo, San Ildefonso Pueblo, Tesuque Pueblo, and Taos Pueblo. Here are the centuries-old Spanish hill towns of Chimayo, Cordova, and Truchas. Here is the historic Palace of the Governors, originally constructed in 1610 and occupied in turn by Spaniards, Indians, Mexicans, and Americans over three centuries. Here is the St. Francis Cathedral

standing on the site of the first church constructed in 1711. Its great modern builder was Archbishop Lamy, whose devoted service was so magnificently recorded by Willa Cather. As St. John's College establishes itself in this new cultural surrounding, in the City Different, the omens indeed seem auspicious for a blending of heritages and for new insights on Homer or Plato or Dante or Machiavelli.

But whether the campus be east or west, the fundamental tenets of St. John's College remain the same. This college is a community of learners, whether in Annapolis or in Santa Fe—a community in which the seniors are the tutors and the juniors are the students but all are learners together. We are a community characterized at one and the same time by both multiplicity and unity. Our individual backgrounds, experiences, education, prejudices, and religious beliefs contribute to our diversity. Our common goal of liberal education provides essential unity to our endeavor.

Nothing could be more difficult than to set down commonly held positions, since the very essence of St. John's is to encourage each person to think for himself or herself. Yet I submit that there is a *credo* to which most of us—tutors and students alike—subscribe. At the welcome risk of provoking argument, let me set down certain propositions which it seems to me most of us would defend.

First, we believe that there is such a thing as truth, that truth is not man-made but that it has objective existence, and that truth is capable of being apprehended. For some of us truth may be limited to the sphere of science, for others Plato's forms, or *εἶδαι*, may have strong appeal. For still others there may be firm faith in the revealed truth of the Jewish or Christian religion. Most of us, I submit, would reject a pragmatic definition of the truth. We believe that it is somehow there, immutable and often unattainable, but nevertheless there waiting to be discovered.

Second, we have confidence in man's reason, both as a means of searching for knowledge and truth and also as a governor of man's life and actions. Hence our conviction as to the role of dialectic. Every proposition and opinion should be capable of being subjected to scrutiny, questioning, and debate. Rational men and women of good will and objectivity should be capable of achieving genuine insights and understandings as they jointly press their inquiry into the truth.

Third, the liberal arts are the means to man's understanding. These are truly the tools by which he learns. At the same time a principal goal of man's education must be to cultivate and develop these liberal arts and skills. I quote the St. John's Catalogue:

The liberal arts enable men to win knowledge of the world around them and knowledge of themselves in this world. Under their guidance men can free themselves from the wantonness of prejudice and the narrowness of beaten paths. Under their discipline men can acquire the habit of listening to reason. A genuinely conceived liberal arts curriculum cannot avoid aiming at this most far-reaching of all human goals.

Finally, there is confidence in the long tradition of Western thought in which we stand. We believe that the great thinkers, religious leaders, philosophers, and scientists of the past speak to us today with a high degree of validity and that this life of the late twentieth century will be fuller and more meaningful if we know our heritage and enter into the great conversation with our predecessors. This should not imply the uncritical acceptance of time-hallowed dogma. Each book or idea must stand the tests of examination and debate. The remarkable fact is the contemporary relevance of so much that was written so long ago and under such different circumstances. Our task is to give that heritage and tradition new meanings and fresh interpretations.

In summary, then, in the words of the preamble to the College Polity,

Education is the leading out of men from their natural state into the world of inherited customs, intellectual traditions, and spiritual ties. Institutions are set up for this purpose. Beyond this they should also seek to develop the moral and intellectual powers of men to enable them to fulfill best their freely chosen tasks and thus to take their own responsible part in shaping the future.

St. John's College—whether east or west—is a community of learning committed to holding constantly in sight this universal end and the means conducive to it.

Members of the Class of 1968, I salute you. On behalf of the Visitors and Governors, the faculty, and your fellow students, I

admit you to St. John's College and to the rights, privileges,
responsibilities and obligations which are now yours.

* * *

I declare the College in session at the conclusion of the benedic-
tion.

Convocatum Est.

THE LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGE—ANACHRONISM OR PARADIGM?

These are parlous times for the independent liberal arts college. Harbingers of gloom and other Cassandras freely predict the probable demise of this allegedly anachronistic institution upon the American educational scene. The Darwinian thesis of the survival of the fittest is the ground for such pessimism.

As we explore the question of whether the free-standing liberal arts college has outlived its usefulness and lost its relevance, let us go back to the Latin word *conlegium* or *collegium*. The root word here is *legere*, meaning "to choose, to pick, to collect, or to gather together." There is a close connection here to the word *collèga*, "one chosen at the same time," that is, a colleague. A *collegium* is therefore a group of persons united in collegueship, a guild, a corporation, or a college.

History shows that the word *collegium* was first applied to hostels for poor students. Apparently the cathedral chapter of Paris established the first college around the year 1180. It was called The College of the Eighteen. The Sorbonne in Paris, Balliol, Merton, and University Colleges at Oxford, and Peterhouse College at Cambridge followed in the mid-thirteenth century. On the continent the university tended to absorb the colleges, but in England the colleges dominated the universities instead. They often provided complete curricula and became teaching institutions rather than simple hostels.

It was the British college which provided the model for the young American colleges of the seventeenth and eighteenth cen-

turies. Harvard College, the first, was started in 1636 under Congregational Church auspices. Its founders were largely Cambridge men from Emmanuel College. Most early American colleges began under church sponsorship. The Episcopalians were involved in founding William and Mary College in 1693, the Congregationalists in opening "The Collegiate School" in 1701, later to become Yale College. The Presbyterians founded Princeton in 1746, and the Baptists founded the College of Rhode Island, the forerunner of Brown University, in 1765. Our own college, St. John's, had ties with the Church of England, later the Episcopal Church, for many years. Of the hundred eighty-two colleges born prior to the war between the States, only one in nine was a public institution.

The modern university with its correlative emphases upon teaching and research has been a more recent development. Here the pattern tended to be that of the German university, dating back to the creation of the University of Berlin in 1810. This type of institution came into being in the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century in universities like the Johns Hopkins University and the University of Chicago. Harvard, Yale, and other institutions which had begun as colleges became universities as they added graduate work, oftentimes in areas which had long been considered too technical and too utilitarian for the intellectual life of the scholar. A landmark in American educational history was the introduction of the elective system into the undergraduate curriculum by President Charles William Eliot of Harvard at the turn of the century. The old liberal arts curriculum built around the *trivium* of grammar, rhetoric, and logic and the *quadrivium* of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy thus yielded to a wide range of subjects, many of them avowedly illiberal and often highly specialized.

It may be well at this point to ask ourselves what we understand by the liberal arts, which should be the hallmark of the liberal arts college. The Greek word for such an art is τέχνη, from which the English words "technique" and "technical" are derived. Liberal arts are therefore skills, but liberal or liberating skills, that is, skills of the mind. The primary function of these liberal arts or skills has been to mediate man's understanding and to give conscious form to knowledge. In contemporary terms, man uses words, or verbal symbols, as he practices such liberal arts as analyzing, thinking,

writing, speaking, and deciding. By the same token he uses a set of mathematical symbols as he practices such liberal arts as counting, measuring, deducing, experimenting, and demonstrating. In the words of the St. John's Catalogue, "Knowledge advances and the fundamental outlook of man may change over the centuries, but these arts of understanding remain in one form or another indispensable."

And now let us return to the word "college." The *Oxford English Dictionary* offers several definitions. A college is termed "an organized society of persons performing certain common functions and possessing certain rights and privileges, a body of colleagues, a guild, a fellowship." I pass over one definition which suggests that a college "often combines, in its original character, the functions of a local charity for the aged, and of eleemosynary education for the young." It is unlikely that either hard-working professors, on the one hand, or high tuition-paying students, on the other, would appreciate such a definition. It is safer to understand the college as "a society of scholars formed for the purpose of study and instruction."

It is my contention and my faith that the fundamental concept of the liberal arts college is still valid and relevant, and that such a college can indeed provide a paradigm for American education. But there are necessary conditions. The liberal arts college must be true to itself. It must commit itself to its own distinctive program, and it must practice this with integrity. It must not attempt to be all things to all men, nor may it seek with impunity to be an inadequate replica of the university. Its competitive position depends, not upon its similarity to other institutions, but rather upon its uniqueness. All of this means that the liberal arts college must constantly resist pressures, even well-meaning ones, to alter its program. Alumni, the general public, the government, and even the faculty and students, may exert such pressures. I am not suggesting that the liberal arts college remain static and stagnant. Far from it! My only concern is that such change foster, rather than impede, the liberal learning which should animate the entire institution.

In the United States we are fortunate to have a wide range of colleges and universities. The diversity of our institutions of higher education has been a source of strength and vigor in this country. This situation should continue. Regardless of the cur-

ricular pattern, there are certain *desiderata* which can make the liberal arts college a paradigm for the education of young men and young women in the four years following their seventeenth or eighteenth birthday. These *desiderata* are fully apparent in the St. John's program.

First, the liberal arts college should be a one-purpose institution. Its objective should be the best possible liberal education of undergraduates. Any compromise with vocational and pre-professional training is hazardous, for experience seems to indicate that the camel has a way of moving into the tent. It goes without saying that the liberal arts college should rarely offer graduate work, for it will divert faculty talent and will prove an expensive appendage.

Second, the curriculum ought to be limited in scope and imaginatively conceived. Courses should be offered which develop the skills of the student in both the great systems of symbols which man has invented and refined—words, on the one hand, and numbers, signs, figures, and formulas, on the other. Moreover, relationships and connections among areas, fields, and courses must be stressed. The primary criterion for the inclusion of any course in the curriculum should be its contribution to developing the thinking skills of the student, *not* the information to be imparted. Facts are always accessible in any good library.

Third, the liberal arts college should concentrate on good teaching. Its faculty members should not be under any compulsion to do research or to publish. These are functions of the university. Nor should consultantships and overseas assignments distract faculty members from their primary activity of classroom teaching. I submit that any teacher can remain intellectually alive by broadening himself or herself through exploring new fields and thus discovering unsuspected implications for his or her own specialty. The teacher will find colleagues and students constant sources of stimulation. Ideally the teacher will eschew the lecture in class for discussion and dialectic. Only as students and teacher both participate in questioning, searching, proposing, analyzing, and defending will the best liberal teaching and learning take place. Parenthetically, I might add that just as the teacher is not to be diverted by extraneous activity, neither should the student be. Extracurricular engagement, athletic, social or other, must never

usurp the interest and attention of any student, else the teaching at the liberal arts college has surely failed.

A fourth consideration is size. The liberal arts college should be content to remain small and should resist the temptation to grow. Careful study will determine optimum size for any liberal arts college from an educational and financial point of view. But even more important is preservation of the sense of community, which is one of the liberal arts college's greatest assets. We are already reaping the whirlwind in certain of our larger institutions where computers and gigantic lecture courses have robbed the student of any feeling that he matters as a person. In the small liberal arts college communicating is possible among students and faculty members, who incidentally include among their number those much maligned but very necessary characters unhappily known as administrators.

A final and most important consideration is independence of action. The liberal arts college can be free of political and other pressures. Its board of trustees can guarantee responsible academic freedom. Its faculty can be encouraged to experiment with new teaching techniques or new sequences in the curriculum. Its students exercise their freedom to study and to learn, with full assurance that the faculty and the administration care and that the students are indeed the only reason for the college's existence.

Should the liberal arts college succeed in what I have proposed for it—undeviating adherence to its single purpose of liberal education, limiting its curriculum, concentrating on effective teaching, preserving smallness and a real sense of community, and maintaining independence of thought and action—it will indeed become the paradigm to be emulated by other institutions. Witness already the movement in large universities to create small undergraduate colleges within themselves—the Santa Cruz campus of the University of California and Justin Morrill College at Michigan State University, for example.

But the real and lasting effects flowing from a dedication of the liberal arts college to its fundamental commitment will be the influence upon the individual student. You, the members of the Class of 1973, stand before us today as you begin four years in these halls. The faculty, the Board, the alumni, and the friends of

St. John's College have sought to provide you here with a place and the conditions where learning can take place. Such learning, as I am sure you are aware, is a highly individual matter. Your success four years hence will not be attested to by a diploma. Rather each of you will need to assess for yourself how well you meet the several criteria which in my opinion measure a liberal education.

Will your mind be keener, more imaginative, and more versatile as a result of your college experience? Will it be simply a storehouse of rapidly disappearing facts, or will it be a tool which you can employ with joy and confidence in the years that lie ahead?

Will you be aware of the tradition in which you stand and will you therefore live with some perspective of history? Too many people today are ignorant of "the minutes of the previous meetings," to recall Stringfellow Barr's phrase. They live in the here and the now, an isolated and lonely existence, as compared to life in the rich company of man's accumulated heritage.

Will you have confronted and honestly sought answers to the persisting and baffling questions of man's existence and of his relation to his fellows, to the world around him, and to the Divine Force which must have brought him into being? Will you therefore have discovered and developed a personal philosophy of life that will make living meaningful and satisfying?

Finally, will you respect reason and will you have confidence that dialectic—reasonable conversation and communication between rational men and women—can arrive at solutions to problems and can approach the attainment of truth? Eristic disputation, or fighting with words, seems currently fashionable, whether in a tirade from a socialist country or a confrontation on a college campus. History demonstrates that it is a totally inadequate substitute for reasoned dialectic.

Members of the Class of 1973, on behalf of the members of the faculty and of the Board of Visitors and Governors, I welcome you to St. John's College and wish you well as you continue the life-long process of education. I hope that your experience in this college will enable you to share my conviction that the liberal arts college is hardly archaic and my faith that it can and will provide a paradigm for the future.

RELEVANCE

Changing times produce new fads and fashions on the college campus just as in the market place. Only two decades ago the byword was "general education," a brave movement which founded on survey courses and professional attachment to fields of specialization. More recently colleges have suddenly become concerned with the "mix" of their student bodies. This apparently means assuring proper representation of rich and poor, male and female, white and black, scholarly and athletic. This incidentally is alleged to foster another newly discovered *desideratum* in higher learning—what is euphemistically referred to as "dialogue." I presume that this simply means that different groups and different persons talk with each other, admittedly an essential feature of education that is sometimes overlooked in the contemporary reliance upon the lecture amphitheater, closed circuit television, and the ubiquitous computer.

Now, in 1968, the magic word seems to be "relevance." Numbers of students complain that the courses they are subjected to have no relevance to the world in which they live. They are threatened by the draft, frustrated by the machinations of politicians, concerned at the "deliberate speed" of the civil rights movement, sympathetic with the plight of ghetto-dwellers, and disillusioned with the seeming hypocrisy of the adult world. These students discover no relationship between their studies and the pressing practical problems of the world around them. In dissatis-

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Annapolis, September 15, 1968

faction they desert the classroom for VISTA and the Peace Corps or rally to the activist cause by demonstrating against the war in Vietnam or by occupying the harassed president's office.

I recall Mark Van Doren's hypothetical institution in which the sole requirement of its members was to read two hundred books, all of them acknowledged masterpieces. Three groups of students left almost immediately after enrolling for they had entered the institution by mistake. The first group left because they lacked the freedom to read what they pleased and therefore could not develop their personalities; the second departed because their previous diet of outlines, introductions, excerpts, and histories of thought had caused their innate ability to read to atrophy. As to the third group Mr. Van Doren wrote:

Then there was a final group of pedantic youngsters who snorted at the reading list because it was not contemporary. They wanted as swift an introduction as possible to the civilization about them. To the reply that this was that, they were very scornful as they scurried off to become freshmen in some up-to-date college where field trips to factories alternated in the weekly schedule with lectures on large and immediate subjects.

But what is relevance? Is it synonymous with contemporaneity alone? Is education—and especially liberal education—relevant today? More specifically, just how relevant is the St. John's brand of liberal education?

The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines the adjective "relevant" as "bearing upon, connected with, or pertinent to the matter at hand." Webster's *New World Dictionary* states that "relevant implies a close logical relationship with and importance to the matter under consideration." If the matter at hand or under consideration is living a life in the late twentieth century, then it is my conviction that true liberal education, as imperfectly and yet as honestly approached on the two campuses at Annapolis and Santa Fe, is highly relevant.

First I turn to the books themselves, the books which we shall read and discuss together over the four years ahead. Their authors are sometimes called the Great Teachers, the most senior members of the St. John's faculty. Parenthetically, I would note that they

have no tenure here; their terms depend upon the viability and the persisting freshness of their ideas—ideas perhaps formulated in the fourth century before Christ or in the Middle Ages, but equally pertinent to us and to our situation today. Men are men, and they have always confronted the problems of family and government, law and justice, war and peace, stability and change. Modes of living alter as the wheel, steam power, electricity, radio waves, or atomic fission have their impact, but, surprisingly perhaps, the books still speak in relevant terms.

This is an election year. Listen to the pre-television analysis of Alexis de Tocqueville as he described the American political scene in 1835:

I am inclined to attribute the singular paucity of distinguished political characters to the ever-increasing activity of the despotism of the majority in the United States. . . . The moral authority of the majority is partly based upon the notion that there is more intelligence and more wisdom in a great number of men collected together than in a single individual, and that the number of legislators is more important than their quality

In that immense crowd which throngs the avenues to power in the United States I found very few men who displayed any of that manly candour and that masculine independence of opinion which frequently distinguished the Americans in former times, and which constitutes the leading feature in distinguished characters, wheresoever they may be found.

Or consider the same observer's view of the confrontation of the two great present-day nation protagonists, the United States and the Soviet Union. Remember that this appraisal was made one hundred thirty-five years ago:

There are at the present time, two great nations in the world which seem to tend toward the same end, although they started from different points: I allude to the Americans and the Russians. . . . The principal instrument of the former is freedom; of the latter servitude. Their starting-point is different, and their courses are not the same; yet each of them seems to be marked

out by the will of Heaven to sway the destinies of half the globe.

Over two millenia ago Plato recognized what is a central problem in our cities. He expressed concern over the accumulation of wealth by private individuals. He wrote that "one, seeing another grow rich, seeks to rival him, and thus the great mass of the citizens become lovers of money. . . . And in proportion as riches and rich men are honored in the State, virtue and the virtuous are dishonored." The inevitable result, Plato said, was the dichotomy which we know so well as characterizing the plight of our cities today. "Such a city is not one but two cities, the one of poor, the other of rich men; and they are living on the same spot and always conspiring against one another."

Even the generation gap receives attention. Plato urged that parents bequeath to their children not riches but reverence. He had no patience with what he termed "the present style of admonition, which only tells them that the young ought always to be reverential." Instead, he wrote,

A sensible legislator will rather exhort the elders . . . to take heed that no young man sees or hears one of themselves doing or saying anything disgraceful; . . . The best way of training the young is to train yourself at the same time; not to admonish them, but to be always carrying out your own admonitions in practice.

Samuel Johnson much later wrote with some prescience of certain current college students: "The mental disease of the present generation is impatience of study, contempt of the great masters of ancient wisdom, and a disposition to rely wholly upon unassisted genius and natural sagacity."

No one should conclude that the Great Books always provide quotations like these, which are applicable to all contemporary problems. The real value of the books resides in their effect upon us and upon our thinking. Somehow the difficulties and problems confronting us all appear somewhat different after we have read these books. Or, to put it another way, we gain new insights from this reading and discussion that enable us to approach current problems more intelligently and more imaginatively.

But the relevance of the St. John's program goes beyond the content of the books themselves. In the seminar, and the tutorials

as well, the concern of the College is with the processes of thinking. As all of us seek to understand and develop an idea or a mathematical theorem, as we translate a passage of Greek or French into clear and precise English, as we move from particulars in the laboratory to hypotheses and scientific laws, our reasoning powers are enhanced and developed. Thirty-one years of experience with teaching the St. John's program have enabled the deans and the faculty to evolve a curriculum which is well designed to inculcate in the learning mind the liberal or freeing skills which are the birthright of every man and woman.

No curriculum and no individual course can anticipate the information and the special skills which a world in rapid flux may well require of any individual a decade after leaving the comfortable confines of the college campus. Instead, the best guarantee for the future is a well-disciplined and highly versatile mind that can function freely and effectively. Such a mind is capable of tackling new and unfamiliar problems; it can analyze situations and define alternatives; it distinguishes fact from propaganda; it is more likely to make right decisions; it can communicate with others clearly and persuasively; it has developed a degree of competency in both the languages which all men use, the language of words and the language of numbers. Such a mind is best prepared to undertake the demands of a specific vocation or profession, to serve the state as citizen or official, and to seek intelligent solutions to the vast and intricate problems which can never be resolved by demonstrations and picket lines. The acquisition of the intellectual skills would appear to be a highly relevant activity.

Third and finally, the relevance of the St. John's curriculum arises from its concern for each individual student. A liberal education, and especially a St. John's education, is education for privacy, and therefore of maximum relevance to each person. Each of us is inescapably sentenced to live with himself or herself for the balance of a natural life. This can be a happy prospect or an impending disaster. Far too many adults have never learned to live with themselves. They must constantly seek escape in gregarious activity, in fun and games, or in spectatorship at the ball park or before the television screen. They lack the inner resources to use their leisure as man by nature should.

If St. John's College succeeds with you animate and, I trust, tractable pieces of clay that sit in front of me this afternoon, it will

have stimulated a love of learning for learning's own sake, a voracious appetite for reading good books, appreciation of good music, and readiness to engage in genuine conversation about subjects that matter. The inculcation of such habits and tastes will make the next five or six decades not only bearable but, I hope, satisfying and stimulating.

Beyond such appreciation, St. John's will aid each of you to discover who you are and what it is to be a man. During the ensuing four years you will confront many of the persisting and almost unanswerable human questions. They have puzzled men in all ages. The books you read concern themselves with these questions. You may agree or disagree with the positions which the Great Teachers take. The point is that the questions about man's existence, his world, and his God must be asked and that answers must be sought. This is essentially a philosophical enterprise, entered upon for no eristic reasons, but rather in the serious search for truth—so that you will know how you wish to live your life and what values matter to you. To avoid such an enterprise during these four college years would indeed make your educational experience one of profound irrelevance.

Members of the Class of 1972, I salute you. On behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors and your fellow learners—both tutors and students—I welcome you to membership in this little community that is St. John's College. We trust that you will find here in the books, the teachers, the dialectic, and the leisure the same relevance that we have found. We bid you Godspeed for the four years ahead.

POLITY

In the fourth book of the *Politics* Aristotle defines and describes the four principal forms of government—monarchy, oligarchy, democracy, and “the so-called aristocracy or government of the best.” He then proposes that there is a fifth form which retains the generic name of polity (πολιτεία), or constitutional government. This he describes as a fusion of oligarchy and democracy, since it draws elements from both.

Most states in which the form called polity exists, Aristotle says, do little more than try to unite the freedom of the poor, the democratic element, with the wealth of the rich, the oligarchical element. Other features of such states might be the oligarchical ones of election to office by a propertied electorate and administration of justice by the few, or the democratic ones of filling offices by lot or eliminating the property qualification for voters. Various modes of combination are possible in what he terms a well tempered polity, but the government must rely on the general willingness of all classes in the state to maintain the constitution.

Πολιτεία, the name Aristotle ascribes to his fifth form of government, is a Greek word with a wide range of meanings. It may refer to the life of a citizen, his condition and rights, and his relationship to the state. It may denominate a government or an administration. Plato used the word as the title for his major book, the work we refer to as *The Republic*. Finally, πολιτεία may be translated “civil polity” or “constitution.”

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, September 13, 1970
Annapolis, September 20, 1970

We at St. John's College have adopted this Greek word to our own purposes, and I should like to explore some of its implications this afternoon at the start of a new college year. We use "polity" in two ways. On the one hand, we speak of the Student Polity, the organized or disorganized body of all St. John's students. By definition all students who matriculate at St. John's College are automatically willing or unwilling members of the Student Polity. On the other hand, we employ the word "polity" to refer to a constitution, usually to the College Polity, the document of governance for the institution.

This Polity rests upon the provisions in the Charter granted to the College by the General Assembly of the new State of Maryland in 1784. Let me quote Article XI:

That the said Visitors and Governors and their successors from time to time and at all times hereafter, forever, shall have full power and authority to constitute and appoint in such manner as they shall think best and most convenient, a principal, a vice-principal of the said college and professors with proper tutors and assistants for instructing the students and scholars of the said seminary in all the liberal arts and sciences, and in the ancient and modern tongues and languages; and the said principal, vice-principal and professors so constituted and appointed from time to time shall be known and distinguished forever as one learned body or faculty by the name of "The Principal, Vice-Principal and Professors of St. John's College;" and by that name shall be capable of exercising such powers and authorities as the Visitors and Governors of the said college and their successors shall by their ordinances think necessary to delegate to them for the instruction, discipline and government of the said seminary and of all the students, scholars, ministers and servants belonging to the same.

The Polity first delineates the component groups constituting St. John's College: the Board of Visitors and Governors, the Faculty, the Students, the Alumni, and the Staff. Successive articles then define the responsibilities, functions, and working relationships of each group. It will interest you to know that there is no

administration here, but instead members of the faculty, associates by name, who often perform their administrative duties in addition to teaching. Instruction and the welfare of the students are vested in the two deans, one here and one on the other campus, advised and assisted by an august body of elected tutors known as the instruction committee.

As to students, Article X states that their primary responsibilities "are to study and to make themselves as competent as possible in all parts of the St. John's program." The section goes on to say that "Their advice and service shall be sought by the Faculty in such matters and in such ways as may best serve the general welfare of the College." Provision is made for the establishment by each Student Polity of a government, representative of Polity members, to which the dean in his discretion may delegate a share of his responsibility for the general welfare of students.

At this point it is important to remember that a college, and especially this college, is not a political organization of any sort. One of the most vital tasks of all colleges should be to preserve the distinction between an educational community and a political community. And yet in Aristotelian terms St. John's College is analogous to a πολιτεία, the fifth form of government, combining within a constitutional framework elements of both democracy and oligarchy.

You the students, by your very numbers, contribute the democratic element. The College is here to help you educate yourselves. Rich and poor alike are accorded the same opportunity and consideration, though admittedly limited scholarship aid funds mean that not all whom we would like to enroll in each freshman class can afford to enroll. The oligarchical element, in Aristotle's terms, is the faculty, especially the teaching faculty or tutors. They, through the dean and the instruction committee, retain responsibility for the course of study you will follow here. Relatively few in number, the tutors bring to the πολιτεία not the oligarchical element of material wealth but rather the rich insights and broad experience of many years of study and learning. Tutors manifest genuine ἔρως, love of learning for learning's own sake and love of you, the learners, as partners in the intellectual enterprise.

St. John's College is small enough and interested enough to be a community of learners. Let me remind you that the Latin word "*communis*," from which "community" is derived, comes from

"con" meaning "together," and the root "mu" meaning "to bind." We are indeed a college of disparate individuals bound together by our common goal of learning. In such a community, communication, the full sharing of thoughts, ideas, and inquiry is paramount. And yet as a community we depend upon the proper ordering of ourselves and our life together. Again by analogy with Aristotle, a well tempered πολιτεία must rely upon the general willingness of all parties to maintain the constitution.

Authority is not a popular term in late twentieth century parlance, and yet I respectfully propose that there are four authorities to which all of us remain subject during these four undergraduate years. One we have already alluded to—the Charter and Polity of St. John's College, together with what we have always hoped would be minimal acceptable conditions for studying and living here. A second authority is the more general range of civil law, those codes of law governing all citizens as prescribed by the legislative bodies of city, state, and nation. A college can never be a sanctuary according immunity to its students and its teachers from the laws of the Republic. Incidentally, this was not always so. The College Charter originally contained an interesting provision exempting both faculty and students of the College "from all rates and taxes on their salaries and from all military duty except in the case of an actual invasion of the State and when general military law is declared." Needless to say, all of us on the faculty are now thoroughly familiar with the Internal Revenue Service, and I suspect that none of you men are unacquainted with local draft boards.

A third authority to which we at St. John's submit I shall term the usages of civility. These are the forms, conventions, and customs which people have built up over the centuries to facilitate their communication with one another and their life together. Students today tend to reject such usages as hallmarks of the establishment. On the other hand, the cumulative experience of the human race seems to demonstrate the value of order, of meaningful forms, and of polite customs. Soon you will discover some of the usages of civility at this college. For example, we rise out of deference to the lecturer on Friday evening when he enters and then when he leaves the hall. In class we address everyone by his or her title, Mr., Mrs, Miss, partly to dignify the person and partly to eliminate any personal element from the idea which the

individual is expressing. Tutors and students alike learn to listen to their fellows with thoughtfulness and attention and without interruption. In matters of dress and personal appearance, we seek not to offend the sensibilities of others. The usages of civility are largely unwritten, but they play a major role in this community.

Finally, the greatest authority to which we submit is reason itself. As the St. John's Catalogue so well expresses it, under the discipline of the liberal arts men and women can acquire the habit of listening to reason. The entire curriculum at this college is designed to foster the acquisition of these liberating arts or skills so that your minds will realize their full potential. Over the four years ahead you will, I hope, free yourselves from narrowness and prejudice and attain the ability to confront situations and problems objectively, to entertain alternatives critically, and to arrive at deciding choices. To listen to reason is never easy. One is reminded of the difficult task which Plato's charioteer confronts in the *Phaedrus* as he seeks to drive in tandem the dark horse of desire and waywardness and the white horse of nobility, temperance, and goodness.

Members of the Class of 1974, I salute you! On behalf of the Board, the faculty and your fellow students, I welcome you to the community of learning that is St. John's College. For each of you we cherish the hope that you will discover the abiding satisfaction which comes from living under the order and authority of a πολιτεία and from acquiring the discipline of the liberal arts.

HSÜN TZU AND ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

For eleven centuries down to 249 B.C., the Chou Dynasty ruled China. The last three of these centuries witnessed a flowering of Chinese thought and philosophy, much of it contemporaneous with similar developments in Greece. Confucius and Lao Tzu antedate Socrates by a century. Mo Tzu was a contemporary of Plato. Mencius was six years Aristotle's junior.

The great problem to which most of these thinkers and philosophers addressed themselves was the ordering of society and the state. The Chou Dynasty had to all intents and purposes lost the mandate of heaven. China was in effect divided among three warring states, Ch'i to the east, Ch'u to the south, and Ch'in to the west. Ch'in it was which finally united the country in 221 B.C. to found a new dynasty, a dynasty famous for the construction of the Great Wall.

One of the last philosophers of this period belonging to the Confucian School was Hsün Tzu. Born about 312 B.C., Hsün Tzu, or Master Hsün, was first a government-supported scholar at the court of Ch'i and subsequently a magistrate in the state of Ch'u. He visited the state of Ch'in as well during his career. In general, his life was the quiet one of a scholar and teacher. His work is marked by eclecticism, but it represents the best ordered and most complete philosophical system in China down to that date.

As we at St. John's College embark upon another academic session, reading and studying the great thinkers in our Western

Matriculation Convocation: Annapolis, September 25, 1966
Santa Fe, October 2, 1966

tradition, I invite you to hearken to the Eastern voice of Hsün Tzu. Perhaps there is a greater kinship than one would expect between the philosopher kings of Plato's *Republic* and the sages upon whom Hsün Tzu relied to establish ritual principles and set forth laws and regulations for the state. Perhaps his observations upon encouraging learning have an unsuspected relevance to this college in 1966 and to our common goal.

The gendeman, says Hsün Tzu, forms a triad with heaven and earth, which originally produced him. His function it is to bring order to heaven and earth. "Man possesses energy, life, intelligence, and, in addition, a sense of duty," Hsün Tzu writes. "Therefore he is the noblest being on earth." It is this sense of duty which enables him to set up hierarchical divisions for all people on this earth and maintain harmony among them. With society thus properly organized by a wise and responsible ruler, the state and all its citizens will prosper.

The fundamental difficulty, as Hsün Tzu conceived it, is that man is by nature evil and that "goodness is the result of conscious activity." All men are born with a fondness for profit, with feelings of envy and hate, and with desires stimulated by the senses. It is therefore Hsün Tzu's cardinal principle that "man must first be transformed by the instructions of a teacher and guided by ritual principles, and only then will he be able to observe the dictates of courtesy and humility, obey the forms and rules of society, and achieve order."

Order, then, results from clear definition of hierarchy, that is, the classes or groups of people composing society; and from the practice of the appropriate rituals or principles, that is, the maintenance of good form and the observance of proper obligations and courtesies among people. Stress is laid upon the basic Confucian relationships, those between father and son, elder brother and younger brother, husband and wife, and ruler and subject. Each member of these pairs has certain continuing duties and responsibilities toward the other.

In living his life man should seek as his standard and guide the Tao, usually translated as "The Way." The true Way embodies constant principles and is at the same time capable of embracing all changes. It is more than a matter of harmonizing with natural forces. In its positive aspect it can control man's search for satisfaction. The Tao is thus almost unattainable, and yet one must

seek constantly to understand it so that one's living can be governed accordingly.

It is the mind which plays a key role in understanding the Way and in guiding man's actions. Hsün Tzu says,

Man is born with an intellect and where there is intellect there is an awareness of differences. An awareness of differences means that one can have an understanding of a variety of facts at the same time, and where there is such understanding, there is diversity. And yet the mind is said to be unified because it does not allow the understanding of one fact to impinge upon that of another. Therefore it is said to be unified.

The mind is the ruler of the body and the master of its godlike intelligence. It gives commands, but it is not subject to them. . . . Although the objects it perceives may be many and diverse, if its acuity is of the highest level, it cannot become divided within itself.

The mind must never violate just principles. Even though a man's desires may be excessive, his actions need not be so, for the mind will curb them. Desires come from nature and are received by man at birth, and the search to satisfy them is directed by the mind in its conscious activity.

Hsün Tzu is therefore vitally concerned with learning, so that the mind can be developed. It will thus be able to understand the principles of the Tao, on the one hand, and be capable of making proper distinctions and decisions to govern men's actions, on the other. Hsün Tzu says that, if you guide the mind

with reason, nourish it with clarity and do not allow external objects to unbalance it, then it will be capable of determining right and wrong and of resolving doubts. But if you allow petty external objects to pull it about, so that its proper form becomes altered and its inner balance upset, then it will not be capable of making even gross distinctions.

St. John's College is its own microcosmic society with hierarchical divisions not unrelated to those of Hsün Tzu. Our small world here is made up not only of tutors and students, but also of

Board members, administrative officers, staff members, and even alumni. The proper end of this college—learning—can only prosper as the duties and responsibilities of each person are clearly understood and freely accepted so that order and good form prevail.

Our search is for the truth, which we understand our Tao to be. This is an immensely difficult undertaking. It requires that we devote ourselves wholeheartedly and unstintingly to the nurture and development of the mind. Whether we agree with Hsün Tzu that man's nature is evil, or accept instead his predecessor Mencius' view that man is by nature good, we all still recognize the primacy of learning.

Now as we embark anew upon our common venture, let us heed the admonitions of Hsün Tzu, each of them as applicable today as they were nearly two and a half millenia ago:

As to your choice of college and classmates, "A gentleman will take care in selecting the community he intends to live in, and will choose men of breeding for his companions."

As to your tutors, "I say that in learning nothing is more profitable than to associate with those who are learned, and of the roads to learning, none is quicker than to love such men."

As to your seminar participation, "There are words that invite disaster and actions that call down shame. A gentleman must be careful where he takes his stand."

As to your study habits, "If there is no dark and dogged will, there will be no shining accomplishment; if there is no dull and determined effort, there will be no brilliant achievement."

As to your conduct, he who honors good form in all its aspects, "though he may not yet have full understanding, can be called a model man of breeding; while one who does not honor good form, though he may have keen perception, is not more than a desultory pedant."

As to the term of your education, "Learning continues until death and only then does it cease. Therefore, we may speak of an end to the program of learning, but the objective of learning must never for an instant be given up."

Members of the Class of 1970, I salute you! I welcome each of you to St. John's College in our common search for the Tao of truth. In Hsün Tzu's words,

The student reads and listens to explanations in order to penetrate the Way, ponders in order to understand it, associates with men who embody it in order to make it part of himself, and shuns those who impede it in order to sustain and nourish it. He trains his eyes so that they desire only to see what is right, his ears so that they desire to hear only what is right, his mind so that it desires to think only what is right. . . . When he has reached this stage, he cannot be subverted by power or the love of profit; he cannot be swayed by the masses; he cannot be moved by the world. . . .

He who has such constancy of virtue can order himself, and, having ordered himself, he can respond to others. He who can order himself and respond to others—that is what is called the complete man.

MAO'S CULTURAL REVOLUTION AND LIBERAL EDUCATION

For many weeks this spring the feature film at the Ambassador Theatre in Kowloon was a Chinese communist production entitled "Chairman Mao Is the Rising Red Sun in Our Hearts." This full-length documentary records the great celebration at the Tien An Men in Peking on October 1, 1966, the anniversary of the birth of the People's Republic of China.

Here were the brick-red walls, the yellow tiled roofs, and the white marble bridges and balustrades of the vast open reception area in front of the ancient imperial palace. In the days of the Manchu Dynasty these sacred precincts were open only to ambassadors and to high government officials. This was truly, in the words of the westerner, the Forbidden City.

How different the scene in 1966! The area is filled with some two millions of people standing in ranks by companies, organizations, schools, trade unions, and the like. Each group is uniformed as befits its members. Each group carries bunting or flags to display at pre-arranged signals. Great banners and posters wave in the breeze, the red Chinese characters adding color to the whole. High above the old gateway on a balcony are the dignitaries of the People's Republic of China. Again and again the film returns to dwell on the florid and impassive face of Mao Tse-tung, Chairman of the Government. He never speaks. Instead it is his henchman, Lin Piao, who harangues the crowd through blaring loudspeakers. Over and over again he praises and practically deifies his chief, the imperturbable Mao.

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, September 10, 1967
Annapolis, September 17, 1967

Behind the front row of government dignitaries sit members of the diplomatic corps, black, brown, and white. These representatives of foreign nations are likewise the object of the camera's eye, as the film seeks to show the universality of European, Asian and African support for the Mao regime. Following the speeches, the various units parade by the reviewing stand cheering Mao as they pass. In the evening, fireworks fill the air. Chairman Mao then delights the populace by walking down among them and sitting somewhat awkwardly here and there with little groups of spectators, all of whom are overawed by his presence. So the day ends, after what must have been a twelve-hour demonstration.

To see this film in Hong Kong, as we did in May of this year, is an unnerving and disturbing experience. We were apparently the only westerners in the theatre audience. Our presence was observed with surprise by some, with amusement by others, and with hostility by a few. We were frankly relieved when the film came to an end and we emerged into the reality of Nathan Road, the principal shopping street of Kowloon.

The English language advertisement of the picture devoted over a page of small type to highly adulatory and naively extravagant praise of Chairman Mao. His descent to his people and his sharing of spectatorship with them were described in fulsome and flowery phrases. The repetitiousness of both the announcement and the film itself conspired to produce infinite boredom in the western reader or viewer but seemed to inspire the Chinese audience to fervor and devotion.

"Chairman Mao Is the Rising Red Sun in Our Hearts" has something to say to young men and women who are entering St. John's College in Annapolis and Santa Fe this September of 1967. First and most obvious is the reminder that we live in a world marked by deep cleavages in ideology, thought, and aspiration. The dichotomy which first comes to mind is that between communism and western democracy. But there are other cleavages as well. The film reminds one that within communism itself there is division between Soviet ideology on the one hand and Chinese Communist ideology on the other. One recalls too the current conflict within China between proponents and opponents of Mao's so-called "Cultural Revolution."

One of the basic tasks which lie before you over your undergraduate years is to read and understand modes of thought and

ideologies, philosophic principles, and religious tenets. No one can intelligently claim to oppose communism today without knowing its basic theories. One must investigate as well the consistency between practice and theory, whether in the Soviet Union, the European satellite nations, or the People's Republic of China. Even more important is your task of searching out the roots of our own government, the philosophic principles and the political theories underlying the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution, as well as the divergence between theory and practice in the United States. Only then can you begin to comprehend this Republic. Only then can you become an intelligent citizen participating in its affairs.

The second point pertinent to a St. John's education is the complete acceptance of party slogans and party propaganda. Young and old alike in Peking seemed to be completely swayed into a kind of mass hysteria by the words of their leaders. The scene at the Tien An Men was reminiscent of the gigantic Nazi rallies of Hitler's Germany or of the fascist conclaves of Mussolini's Italy. The blind and unquestioning devotion to a cause seemed the overriding consideration. No one asked why. No one sought the facts. No one relied on reason. The undulating sea of humanity generated a sense of unanimity and identification with in each spectator and participant. There was danger inherent here as well. Might not a people subjected to mass hypnosis and deluded as to their real strength embark upon a war or a foreign adventure without giving careful thought to the consequences?

Here at St. John's you have the infinitely difficult task before you of learning to listen to reason. You must question all of your assumptions and preconceived notions. You must seek out the facts. You must learn to distinguish fact from propaganda, truth from falsehood. All of this becomes possible only as you acquire some mastery of the tools of understanding. These are the time-honored liberal arts, or liberal skills, the arts which free a person from ignorance and prejudice. They do more—they free the mind to function as it should. These intellectual arts or skills are not easily mastered. They require rigorous discipline and application. The seminars, the tutorials, and the laboratory at St. John's College are all designed to foster such growth and development.

Another pertinent point clearly brought out in the film is the subordination of the individual to the state. Perhaps this happens

more easily in an Asian country where there is little regard for the individual human life. The very enormity of the population problem in China has made the average Chinese somewhat immune to the suffering and death which he observes around him. It is the sheer force of human manpower that makes China dangerous in North Korea or North Vietnam. The communist concern, therefore, is not for the individual but rather with the individual's contribution toward the building of the state and of the communist society.

By contrast St. John's College, in company with its sister institutions, inherits the tradition of the Jews, of the Greeks, and of the Christians that the individual matters. His rights, his capabilities, and his opportunities are important. They may even be worth fighting for on occasion. The dignity and worth of each man or woman is regarded seriously.

Here at St. John's you will have to ask yourself the difficult questions: Who am I? What is it to be a man? How am I related to the world around me? You will seek to understand yourself and your fellows. You will not be alone in your questioning. You will read what some of the great thinkers, philosophers, and men of God have written about these questions over the years. You will discuss them with your tutors and with your fellow students. You will seek to arrive at answers that will be meaningful and satisfying to you. It is my hope that you will be able to approach the truth.

Finally, the film exemplifies commitment to a cause on the part of the individual person. The cause in this case is the growth and development of the Chinese nation according to a Marxist pattern. The most ardent and active workers shown in the film were the Red Guards, young men and women whose idealism has been captured by Mao and his Cultural Revolution. Many of these same Red Guards are former university students. They have left their studies to engage in demonstrations, mass meetings, and disciplinary action decided on by them against moderates and alleged traitors.

One may indeed consider the whole program misguided. Perhaps the Guards are an embarrassment at times even to Mao himself. Regardless, they merit our attention for two reasons. First, in their idealism they have committed themselves to a cause in which they seem to believe wholeheartedly. Second, in pursuit

of their goal they have been willing to undergo sacrifice and to accept the rigors of a life of service and party discipline.

We at St. John's likewise have a commitment, but ours is not one of uncritical obedience. We are committed to the ideal of liberal education. We are ardent in our conviction and have refused to compromise with professional or vocationally oriented education. We recognize that liberal education is an almost unattainable goal and yet we have to keep on trying. Liberal education means continuing to learn, continuing to examine, continuing to question. Our commitment to liberal education is therefore a commitment to the life of reason. We believe with Socrates that the unexamined life is not worth living.

The tutors and the other students at the College invite you to commit yourselves to our common cause of liberal learning. In doing so, we remind you that there is no short cut. Greek paradigms must be learned. Euclidian propositions must be demonstrated. Laboratory observations must be painstakingly and accurately made. Books must be read and reread. Seminar participation must be thoughtful and responsible. Only through commitment, rigor, and discipline can you become full members of this community.

Members of the Class of 1971, I salute you! On behalf of the faculty and students of St. John's College, I welcome you and wish you well over the four years ahead. It is an exciting and important venture upon which you are embarked.

CHINESE HIGHER EDUCATION AND ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE

In May of this year, Mrs. Weigle and I were privileged to spend three weeks in the People's Republic of China. It was her first visit, but my fourth, for I had taught at the Yali Union Middle School in Changsha, Hunan Province, from 1931 to 1933. Seeing China again thirty-three years after I had left Nanking at the end of World War II was a fascinating experience. It occurred to me that recent developments in higher education in the People's Republic might provide an interesting contrast to the tenets, objectives, and methods of St. John's College, as we embark upon the forty-second year of this program in the liberal arts.

For close to a decade the People's Republic experienced what was euphemistically termed the Cultural Revolution. Under the leadership of Chiang Ching, then wife and later widow of Chairman Mao Tse-tung, China's tradition and all of her rich culture were denied in favor of contemporary revolutionary thought and propaganda. Intellectuals were regarded as reactionaries and often as enemies of the people. Students and their teachers alike were sent out into the countryside to discover how it felt to work in the fields with the farmers. Or they became temporary workers in factories, large and small, to learn the ways of laborers.

The effect of the Cultural Revolution upon Chinese education was catastrophic. For four years, from 1966 to 1970, no new students were admitted into the universities. Those who came before and after were largely activist party members nominated by

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, August 27, 1978
Annapolis, September 8, 1978

their communes or their fellow factory workers because of their devotion to the thought of Mao. There were no entrance examinations. Standards fell. The teaching had to be adjusted to the level of the inept learners. Grades were simply not given, for to flunk a strong party member might well cost a professor his job. Unhappily too, the four-year undergraduate course was shortened to three years, a considerable portion of which was devoted to political dogma.

All of this changed in 1976, as the leaders of the People's Republic turned against Chiang Ching and her three principal associates after the death of Chairman Mao. In China today there is repudiation of the theory and practice of the so-called "Gang of Four." In fact, there is a tendency to blame most of the country's shortcomings and current problems upon the Gang of Four. The present leadership under Chairman Hua Kuo-feng seems considerably more enlightened. It appears to appreciate the wealth of China's traditional culture; it is engaging in archaeology and the restoration of famous monuments; it seems eager to stress education; it seeks friendship abroad and is even willing to send students to other countries for technical and scientific study.

In Shanghai we were able to visit Fudan University, founded in 1905. Today there are thirty-six hundred students in what is once again a four-year undergraduate program. Departments include biology, chemistry, physics, mathematics, optics, computer science, and nuclear science. Other departments include Chinese language and literature, foreign languages, history, philosophy, and journalism. Entrance examinations have been reinstated, and there now seems to be appreciation of the role which brains can play, as over against party regularity. Students no longer dictate the direction of the university. Instead, they appear to understand that they must educate themselves if they are to serve their country and their society in the years ahead. Research too is going forward at the university level. At Fudan we saw a mercury-vapor-excited lamp which had been developed without filaments. The professor claimed it lasted longer, saved power, remained cool, and shone without a flicker. To a liberal artist like me it appeared to have great promise.

Clearly the Chinese university of 1978 is not far different from its American, British, or Canadian counterpart. It suffers from the same ills that characterize higher education in western nations.

Learning seems to be fragmented among departments. There is little contact between departments. Each is a world unto itself. Students choose majors, often in science and technology, without achieving a well-balanced liberal education. Lectures are the normal mode of instruction. The pressure of numbers dictates this. Facilities are limited, so the competition for places is keen, now that entrance by examination has replaced the political acceptability of the prospective student.

All this contrasts with St. John's College, which is small and offers a prescribed curriculum in the liberal arts. Departments and majors disappeared here in 1937. Dialectic and discussion replaced lectures, original works supplanted text books. St. John's College therefore differs from a Chinese university, just as it differs from other institutions of higher education in this country. But three observations I made in China seem pertinent to St. John's, after my admittedly brief and inadequate experience with Chinese higher education. These may help to illumine what we all seek to do here.

First, I was heartened to find a restoration of regard for ancient Chinese culture and the heritage of the past. Confucius, Mencius, Lao Tzu, Han Fei-tzu, and Mo Ti are no longer anathema, but may be read and studied. The traditional Peking opera is performed. A renewed interest has been aroused in the art and artifacts discovered in excavating Shang, Ch'in, and Han Dynasty tombs. Old temples and palaces have been repaired and restored; some have been converted into museums and parks for all the people to enjoy. Even western classics like Mark Twain's *Huckleberry Finn* and Tolstoi's *War and Peace* have been made available to the general public in government book stores. Admittedly, all of this is only a beginning for the Chinese student, but it represents a hopeful start. It seems important that he or she should develop some sense of continuity with China's great past, as well as some acquaintance with the body of tradition in the West.

The St. John's Catalogue states that liberal education should seek to develop free and rational men and women who, among other attributes, are "intelligently appreciative of their common cultural heritage." We believe that this appreciation follows from the reading and seminar discussion of over a hundred thirty significant books, starting with the Greeks and the Bible. In these books the great thinkers, authors, philosophers, historians, politi-

cal theorists, and scientists of past centuries have expressed their ideas and thoughts, their theories and hypotheses. It is a basic tenet of St. John's College that each student and each tutor should read the books for himself or herself and then discuss them at the seminar table. By so doing, both students and tutors may begin to understand their cultural heritage. They thus take part in what Robert Hutchins called the Great Conversation, which has gone on among Western scholars for centuries.

A second observation has to do with commitment. Whatever one may think of Mao Tse-tung's philosophy and practice, it must be granted that he instilled a sense of mission and of service into the vast majority of the Chinese people. Again and again we were impressed by the conviction of people in all callings that they are working for the good of the nation, rather than their personal advancement. Farmers seek to increase crops and laborers industrial production—all for the benefit of the country. So too, students work to prepare themselves for future careers which will contribute to the well-being of the People's Republic. Salaries and wages are a good indication of the modest difference between people doing various types of work. In the university, for instance, instructors receive a hundred to a hundred fifty yuan per month, sixty to ninety dollars, and professors' salaries amount to only three hundred yuan a month, or a hundred eighty dollars. Instructors' pay is comparable to factory or farm wages, professors' salaries to executive or managerial compensation. Each person, whatever the job or station, has a personal dignity, and each seems bent on cooperation with his or her colleagues to advance the progress of the People's Republic of China.

The St. John's Catalogue states as another of the College's objectives the development of men and women who are "conscious of their social and moral obligations." It hopes that they will become "mature, competent, and responsible citizens of a free society." Learning at St. John's College is not a competitive enterprise but a cooperative one. Besting a fellow student in a seminar discussion is not the goal; a common search for the truth of a matter is. Grades are not to be the reward for study; rather, we work for the satisfaction and sheer pleasure that come from learning for its own sake—seeing the elegance of a Euclidian proof, or following the logic of a Socratic argument, or recognizing the beauty of a biological structure. Perhaps St. John's College unfits

one for the competitive arena of the market place. I hope that the College inspires a sense of commitment. First, there should be devotion and commitment to our common enterprise of learning throughout the four years. Then I hope that the College instills a sense of commitment to a life of service—to one's family, to one's community, and to one's country. Here perhaps we can usefully emulate the subordination of self to service of others as currently practiced in the People's Republic. This, incidentally, is a principle which the Christian religion has taught for centuries.

Finally, I would observe that the Chinese university appears to be more concerned with the student's acquisition of facts and technical skills than with the development of the traditional liberal arts of the mind. Many courses appear to require rote learning, the memorization and assimilation of material covered in lectures and textbooks. Students do not seem to have an opportunity to develop their questioning ability or their critical powers. Classes in Maoist political theory continue at the university, and here no deviation from established dogma is brooked. Everything is interpreted in terms of Marxism, Leninism, or Maoism. Freedom to question and to think for oneself appears to be denied in the realm of political and social theory.

At St. John's College, on the other hand, you will be encouraged to question, to seek for the reasons for things, to discover basic principles, to hypothesize, and to attempt to justify your opinions. A most important part of our Western intellectual tradition is the mandate to submit it to constant scrutiny and questioning, always in the spirit of a genuine search for truth. All of your study here will be devoted to helping you learn how to learn, to aiding you in developing the tools of learning that are the liberal arts. These are the thinking skills, the liberating skills, which enable us to function as men and women ought to function.

Dorothy Sayers, in a provocative paper read at Oxford in 1947, attributed the low state of education to the fact that it "concentrates on teaching *subjects*, leaving the method of thinking, arguing, and expressing one's conclusions to be picked up by the scholar as he goes along." Medieval education, she claimed, "concentrated on first forging and learning to handle the tools of learning, using whatever subject came handy as a piece of material on which to doodle until the use of the tool became second nature." She described the *trivium* and *quadrivium* of the Middle

Ages. She cited the grammar, dialectic, and rhetoric of the *trivium* as a discipline preliminary to learning the arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy of the *quadrivium*. Let me quote what she has to say, for she describes part of the task which lies ahead of us:

But language itself is simply the medium in which thought is expressed. The whole of the Trivium was, in fact, intended to teach the pupil the proper use of the tools of learning, before he began to apply them to "subjects" at all. First, he learned a language; not just how to order a meal in a foreign language, but the structure of the language—a language, and hence of language itself—what it was, how it was put together and how it worked. Secondly, he learned how to use language: how to define his terms and make accurate statements; how to construct an argument and how to detect fallacies in argument (his own arguments and other people's). Dialectic, that is to say, embraced Logic and Disputation. Thirdly, he learned to express himself in language; how to say what he had to say elegantly and persuasively. At this point, any tendency to express himself windily or to use his eloquence so as to make the worse appear the better reason would, no doubt, be restrained by his previous teaching in Dialectic. If not, his teacher and his fellow-pupils, trained along the same lines, would be quick to point out where he was wrong; for it was they whom he had to seek to persuade.

So we at St. John's College recognize the deficiency in both the Chinese and the American university. We have adopted a curriculum which is based upon the books in our heritage, which seeks to inspire commitment to service, and which stresses the acquisition of the tools of learning—the language tools and the mathematical, musical, and scientific tools. You, the members of the Class of 1982, now join us for the demanding but highly rewarding four years ahead. We welcome you as fellow learners. As Dorothy Sayers writes in concluding her paper, "The sole true end of education is simply this: to teach men how to learn for themselves; and whatever instruction fails to do this is effort spent in vain."

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE— PAST AND PROLOGUE

You, the members of the Class of 1975, have just signed the historic Register of St. John's College. Your names stand now on that long roster of names which dates back to the early days of this Republic. It is honorable and distinguished company. On behalf of my fellow members in the faculty and on the Board of Visitors and Governors I bid you welcome and wish you Godspeed.

To introduce you to this small but venerable college, I should like to relate something of its history and traditions and then share with you its *credo* and its hopes for the future. I do this with some trepidation, for history and traditions seem to be neglected today, if not in popular disrepute. The unhappiness of your generation with the state of the world casts doubts upon the efforts and accomplishments of past generations, none of which, I admit, succeeded in bringing heaven to earth. For many people living today history has no reality—and certainly no constructive message for the contemporary world.

For your generation the future as well may appear black and meaningless. Indeed, many of you fear that the Damoclean sword of nuclear warfare promises the nonexistence of any future. It is only the here and now that seem to have meaning and reality. Mark Van Doren sensitively described the spirit of the young in his talk at the summer celebration of the two hundred seventy-fifth anniversary of St. John's College on the Santa Fe campus early last month:

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Earlier generations had no such problem. Their members knew that the world was here to stay—nothing more simple, nothing more certain. Regardless of what they felt or did, the earth and the heavens above it would survive them. To the extent that no one can wholly believe this any more, those of us who can remember having believed it once are likely to find our minds curiously mixed: at one moment yes, at another no. But with the young this may not be true; and so their minds are single; they do not look ahead because there is nothing to see, and they do not look behind because only ruins—ghosts of worlds—are there; they live at the present moment, and have their own secret way of penetrating its mysteries, which seem to be for them alone.

For us at St. John's College the past is neither ruins nor ghosts of worlds. History is real. Homer, Plato, Dante, and Shakespeare are real people who are our friends and associates. This college is a real place. It is where we converse and share ideas with these men of the past, as have the thousands of students and teachers who have studied and learned here over the past two hundred seventy-five years. St. John's is itself history and tradition. I am bold enough to hope that each of you will find strength and even inspiration in sharing this college and this campus with a Francis Scott Key, a William Pinkney, a Hector Humphreys, and a Henry Barnard.

On July 8, 1696, the House of Burgesses of the Colony of Maryland passed and Governor Francis Nicholson signed the Petitionary Act to "our Dread Sovereigne," King William III, and King William's School was founded. The Act read:

AND MAY IT BE ENACTED, by the King's most excellent majesty, by and with the advice, prayer and consent of this present General Assembly, and the authority of the same, That for the propagation of the gospel, and the education of the youth of this province in good letters and manners, that a certain place or places, for a free-school, or place of study of Latin, Greek, writing, and the like, consisting of one master, one usher, and one writing-master, or scribe, to a school, and one hundred

scholars, more or less, according to the ability of the said free-school, may be made, erected, founded, propagated and established under your royal patronage. And that the most reverend father in God, Thomas by Divine Providence lord-archbishop of Canterbury, primate and metropolitan of all England, may be chancellor of said school; and that, to perpetuate the memory of your majesty, it may be called King William's School, and managed by certain trustees, nominated and appointed by your sacred majesty.

The project of collegiate education in the Colony of Maryland occupied the General Assembly as early as 1732, but nothing came of the various efforts to found a college in Annapolis. We know that a bill was defeated in 1761 through the efforts of the delegates from the Eastern Shore. It was not until 1784 that St. John's College was chartered, perhaps taking its name from St. John's College at Cambridge University or perhaps from a Masonic order. The property, funds, masters, and students of King William's School were then conveyed by an act of the General Assembly to the new institution. The College's aim was "the liberal education of youth in the principles of virtue, knowledge, and useful literature." The Charter, interestingly enough, was the first in the United States specifically to prohibit religious discrimination.

The College had commenced its existence with one building, now known as McDowell Hall named after the College's first principal or president. It was not until 1838 that the second building, Humphreys Hall, was constructed by the president whose name it now bears. The Reverend Hector Humphreys was a builder who also erected Pinkney Hall and the two double faculty residences on each side of the College green, now known as Chase-Stone House and Paca-Carroll House. In 1861 the War between the States interrupted the College. The campus was turned into a receiving station for southern prisoners of war. They were processed at St. John's and then sent on to a camp to the west of Annapolis called Camp Parole. That area, now within the city limits, is known to this day as Parole.

After the war Henry Bernard was named president of St. John's, but he soon left to become the first United States Commissioner of

Education in Washington. The next notable administration was that of Dr. Thomas Fell, a young Englishman, who became president in 1886. During this period the College engaged in a program of compulsory military training. It was of such excellence that the War Department considered St. John's one of the six leading military colleges of the country. Its graduates might thus be commissioned directly into the armed forces. Like Humphreys, Fell was a builder. He added to the campus around the turn of the century Woodward Hall, the library; Randall Hall, the dining hall and a dormitory, and Iglehart Hall, the gymnasium.

In 1923 the military program was abandoned in favor of the elective liberal arts curriculum so characteristic of American colleges and universities. This was the period of St. John's athletic greatness, when its lacrosse teams won two national championships. It was also a time of financial difficulties, induced in part by the depression but also by a scheme for buying up colonial properties in the city of Annapolis. By the middle of the 1930's the College was heavily in debt; it had lost its accreditation; and it seemed that St. John's would disappear from the educational scene.

Meanwhile, at the University of Chicago, President Robert Hutchins had gathered a group of educators to develop an ideal curriculum for a liberal arts college. This was in effect a protest against the specialization and fragmentation of a student's learning. In the summer of 1937 the St. John's Board of Visitors and Governors invited two members of the study group from Chicago, Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan, to become president and dean of the College in Annapolis, bringing with them what has now come to be known as the St. John's program. It was actually a renaissance in American education, the modern equivalent of the traditional liberal arts curriculum, brought up to date by the inclusion of modern science.

This is the program under which you will be studying for the next four years. Many changes in curriculum have been made over the past thirty-four years, but the basic pattern remains fairly constant. Books have been added to the list or dropped from it. Latin and German have yielded to Greek and French. The music tutorial has been instituted. The order and content of work in mathematics and the laboratory have been altered periodically. Perhaps the most radical change of all was the decision in 1951 to

open the College to women, a momentous decision indeed for a brash young college president in a male bastion of such long standing.

By the end of the 1950's St. John's College was experiencing the pressures of the student population explosion. It was clear that the College had a responsibility to accept a larger number of applicants, but neither students nor faculty wished to see the size of the College exceed very much the figure of three hundred. The happy solution seemed to be the creation of a new campus, which would double enrollment without changing the size of the College. Three sites in California—the Monterey Peninsula, Riverside, and Claremont—were under consideration when Santa Fe was suggested by Robert McKinney, publisher of the *The New Mexican* and former member of the St. John's Board. The deciding factors were the cultural orientation of the city, the salubrious climate, the proximity to Los Alamos and its scientists, and the absence of any college independent of state or church. On February 22, 1961, the Board of Visitors and Governors voted to attempt to establish a second St. John's campus in Santa Fe.

On October 1, 1964, an entering class of eighty-four students inaugurated the new campus high on the slope of Monte Sol in the southeast corner of the city. St. John's College, already steeped in the British colonial heritage of Annapolis, now fell heir to the even older Spanish colonial heritage of the Southwest. Four classes have since graduated on the western campus, and a mutually beneficial interchange of faculty and students between the two campuses has been established. Each of you is now the inheritor of the traditions that are this college—a tradition of liberal education, a tradition of Great Authors, a tradition of a college that spans three centuries and a continent as well.

And now let us turn to the present and the future. What do we believe, and what do we hope for? Here we gain some insight from the motto of Phi Beta Kappa, the fraternity of scholars. The Greek letters Phi, Beta, and Kappa are the initials of the three words of that motto: φιλοσοφία βίου κυβερνήτης. We may translate φιλοσοφία as "the love or pursuit of wisdom," or as "speculation." Κυβερνήτης means basically "pilot" or "steersman," and therefore "guide" or "governor." Βίου is the genitive form of βίος, which means "life," here in the sense of "manner or mode of living." We

may therefore translate the motto: The love or pursuit of wisdom is the guide or governor of life.

We at St. John's College pursue learning because we want to. We are confident that we will thus find life most satisfying and meaningful. We accept Aristotle's assertion at the beginning of the *Metaphysics* that "all men by nature desire to know." We seek together for answers to the persisting human questions which have challenged thoughtful men and women in all ages. We share an implicit faith in the existence of immutable truth, rather than relative truth, and we are committed to the search for it, however long and difficult that search may prove to be. We are, in fact, embarked here upon a great philosophical enterprise. With Socrates, we tend to think that the unexamined life is not worth living. The means to our common search for truth, for clearer understanding of the questions perhaps even for partial answers, are the books we read and the conversations we carry on about them in class and out. Our goal is high-minded and probably even unattainable, but we believe we have no alternative. As T. S. Eliot puts it, "For us there is only the trying. The rest is not our business."

To achieve our common goal, all students at St. John's College follow the same course of study. We seek to make of this college, to the maximum extent possible, a genuine community of learning. We try to share our insights and our problems. Learning here is not a competitive enterprise but a cooperative one. Each of you will have the opportunity to participate fully and actively in your own education, to seek help from your fellows, and in turn to offer illumination to them when you can. And yet I would remind you that learning is also a highly individual matter, and that there must be many long solitary hours of reading, of study, and even of contemplation, if you are to participate thoughtfully and constructively in your seminars, your tutorials, and your laboratories.

The content of the St. John's curriculum is primarily the Great Books. These embody the thoughts of the philosophers, political theorists, authors, theologians, mathematicians, and scientists who collectively comprise our heritage as Western men and women. To learn from these Great Teachers at first hand and not through the mediation of secondary texts is our challenge to you. To aid you in working with the ideas of these thinkers, we seek to

develop your ability to use the two great sets of symbols which men have agreed upon to make communication possible—language on the one hand and mathematics on the other. We will seek to make you literate in music and science as well. But I would caution you again. The information in the books is not there to be absorbed by each of you. That would be a prodigious feat of memory quite alien to our purposes. Rather, the subject matter of the books is the basis of our discussions. The ideas are questioned and examined for their validity and their contemporary relevance. In the process of this examination and discussion, such liberal arts or skills are developed as analyzing, hypothesizing, deducing, deciding, demonstrating, and communicating. This is one of our main objectives—to help each of you enhance your reasoning powers, so that your mind will serve you well.

Members of the Class of 1975, the road ahead is not an easy one. There will be periods of frustration and even of despair. But there will be great rewards as well—moments of illumination and exhilaration. And in the end you will have discovered a great and distinguished company of friends in the authors of the books you read. They will be a constant source of strength and inspiration throughout your life. In a world where space has become infinite and time seemingly all too finite, St. John's hopes to give you faith and confidence to face the future. Mr. Van Doren stated this well in his talk this summer:

In spite of what we think we know we go on assuming an intelligible cosmos, just as we go on assuming that there is all the time in the world—an ancient phrase that comes in patly here. In other words, we go on writing psalms, and in some of them we betray our faith that the world will last indefinitely long: will forever and ever be there for minds to measure and for souls to love.

WHO ARE THE TEACHERS?

St. John's seminars, as most of you know, start with an opening question posed by one of the tutors. Though my remarks this evening can hardly be called a seminar, I should like to pose an opening question and then assume the prerogative of discussing it. I shall be quite content if thought is in some degree stimulated or if new perspectives are suggested.

My opening question is a simple one: Who are the teachers at St. John's College?

At first blush the answer appears to be clear and unequivocal: obviously the tutors. The 1784 Charter of the College so states. The Visitors and Governors were authorized "to constitute and appoint in such manner as they shall think best and most convenient a principal, a vice-principal of the said college and professors with proper tutors and assistants for instructing the students and scholars of the said seminary in all the liberal arts and sciences, and in the ancient and modern tongues and languages."

Furthermore, according to the Polity of the College, the primary responsibility of the tutors is to teach and to make themselves as competent as possible in all parts of the St. John's program. The tutors are indeed essential to the teaching at St. John's College, albeit often in a different manner from professors at other institutions. Their role is hardly that ascribed to many teachers by Montaigne in his famous essay *Of the Education of Children*: "Tis the custom of pedagogues to be eternally thundering in their

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pupil's ears, as they were pouring into a funnel, whilst the business of the pupil is only to repeat what the others have said." He went on to say that he would have a tutor correct this error by "permitting his pupil himself to taste things, and of himself discern and choose them, sometimes opening the way to him, and sometimes leaving him to open it for himself; that is, I [Montaigne] would not have him alone to invent and speak, but that he should also hear his pupil speak in turn."

St. John's tutors take their cue from Montaigne. They are not and should not be lecturers, except occasionally on a Friday evening. They are not required to do research and publication, as are many faculty members in other colleges and universities. St. John's tutors are teachers in the best sense of the word. This means that they are lovers of learning for learning's own sake, that they genuinely care for the students in their classes, and that they find stimulus in the books that they read and in the classes over which they preside. It is to be hoped that they are capable of transmitting their excitement and their enthusiasm to students. I trust that they are far different from the kind of teacher once inadvertently alluded to in a mixture of metaphors at a Vassar College faculty meeting. During an earnest discussion of teaching and learning an impassioned and zealous professor reminded her colleagues that in every young student there was a spark of intellectual curiosity and that it was the function of the teacher "to water that spark."

St. John's tutors may disappoint a number of you. Some of you freshmen may have come from school situations where you expected the teacher to give you the word. In vain will you open shiny new notebooks to take down answers to questions or important facts about a book. Such dissemination of information or imparting of "correct" interpretations will not happen here. Indeed there may be no answers to many of the questions and problems to which your classes will address themselves. Perhaps the most important function that the tutor can serve will be to moderate and mediate the discussion, to insist upon definition of terms, and to ask the ubiquitous and disconcerting question "Why?" when an unsupported assertion or statement is made.

No faculty member at any other institution confronts a more demanding task than does the St. John's tutor. Usually he comes to this college after advanced work in a specialized field, but

immediately he becomes a learner with his students. He moves through the seminar books year by year, seeking understandings in subjects which he omitted or neglected in undergraduate and graduate days. Regardless of his training, he undertakes work in mathematics, language, natural sciences, and music, often working closely with a more experienced tutor. It is not wrong to call him a junior renaissance man after he has served his period of apprenticeship. Even in his first year or two at the College his wise and restrained leadership of his classes, his judicious questioning, his insistence upon reason and discipline in learning, and the unstinting giving of his time and energy to the individual student may mark him as a good and devoted teacher.

But there is a second answer to the opening question. St. John's College has another faculty. Milton Mayer, in his essay "Socrates Crosses the Delaware," calls it "the greatest college faculty ever assembled anywhere in the history of the world." He notes that they are not only the best teachers but that they work for nothing as well! The great teachers are, of course, the authors of the books that we read. Even though these teachers may have lived centuries and even millenia ago, they are not regarded as dead at St. John's. Instead of reading interpretations, summaries, and digests, St. John's students confront the great teacher himself and seek to ferret out the thought and the understandings that have made his work endure.

You will be learning history from Herodotus, Thucydides, Plutarch, Tacitus, Gibbon, and Tocqueville. You will be learning political theory from Machiavelli, Locke, Rousseau, Adam Smith, and the authors of the Federalist Papers. Your teachers in mathematics will be Euclid, Ptolemy, Apollonius, Copernicus, Descartes, Lobachevski, and Dedekind. For philosophy your faculty will include Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Descartes, Hobbes, Hume, Kant, Hegel, James, and Peirce. The great theologians under whom you will sit are the writers of certain books of the Bible, St. Thomas Aquinas, Luther, and Calvin. In literature your teachers will be Homer, Sophocles, Virgil, Dante, Chaucer, Shakespeare, Cervantes, Melville, Molière, Goethe, Tolstoi, and Dostoevski. In music you will learn from Bach, Beethoven, Schubert, Mozart, and Stravinsky.

You might wonder how these teachers are chosen to constitute the St. John's faculty. I hasten to correct any impression that this

is a kind of popularity contest or that St. John's has arrogated to itself the selection of the hundred or more greatest books that have ever been written. The great teachers in the program have met one or more of these criteria: The book itself must have been read by a great number of persons over a long period of history. The book must lend itself to discussion and to a number of possible interpretations, not because it is ambiguous but rather because the several interpretations are significant and reinforce one another. A third criterion is that the author must deal with the great themes of human existence—with man and who he is, with men and how they live together, with the world in which man finds himself, and with the God whom man worships. Next, the author's book must be a work of fine art. That means that it must possess an intelligibility and a clarity of form and style which will appeal to the reader. Finally, the book must exemplify the liberal arts. It must demonstrate a mastery of thought, logic, rhetoric, and imagination, for a great teacher is one whom the student reader will wish to emulate.

At the College there are almost no textbooks, no books about the great teachers who wrote these books, no books about books about books. We believe instead in challenging each learning mind with the work of the original teacher. For it is these great teachers who created the heritage of western thought in which all of us stand. Each of us must grapple with each author directly and not through the pallid oversimplification of some textbook writer, whose prose, logic, or imagination can scarcely serve as a model of the liberal arts. Hard work? Yes, but the honing of the mind's intellectual skills is well worth the effort. And surprising as it may seem, there is a relevancy and a timeliness to these great teachers which are completely unsuspected by many college students, to say nothing of their professors.

A third answer to the opening question arises in part out of the very difficulty of dissecting the thought of the great teachers, of seeking meaning and understandings, and of discovering their contemporary applicability. An important category of teachers at St. John's College are the other students—those in your seminar, tutorial, or laboratory sections, those in the question period after a lecture, those that sit with you in the coffee shop or live next door in the dormitory. This college believes that one's fellow students can be and are helpful teachers. It believes that learning here is a

cooperative enterprise rather than a competitive one. It respects the fact that students do teach each other and often their tutors as well.

This philosophy is reflected in St. John's traditional practices. First and foremost, any opinion or statement advanced by a student is seriously entertained by his tutors and fellow students. One can never predict what insight or perspective may be gained from a discussion arising out of an apparently ill-considered question or position. To enhance the learning and to remove the discussion from personalities, forms of courtesy are observed—using formal terms of address instead of nicknames, refraining from interrupting one's colleagues, and avoiding sarcasm or ridicule. The tutor will seek to moderate each class in such a way that each student can on occasion teach as well as learn. The tutor of course has an inalienable right to say, "I do not know," without having his or her general competency called into question.

Just because learning here is a cooperative venture, St. John's makes no provision for any student to pass an examination in a subject to attain advanced standing or to be relieved of a part of the program. The individual student who has greater mastery of the calculus, or of French, for example, is counted upon to do a share of the teaching in the tutorial or the laboratory. Moreover, the success of classroom discussion depends in large measure upon two essential factors: the presence of all students with their tutors, and their thorough and thoughtful reading of the assignment. This is the reason why there is no "cut" system at St. John's, why there is an expectation that, subject always to human frailty, students will be present for all classes.

As a fourth answer to my opening question, I would assert that each of you is your own teacher. In the last analysis, learning is an individual and personal matter. There is no substitute for quiet and thoughtful reading and study in your room, in a library carrel, under the Liberty Tree, or on the slope of Monte Sol. Mortimer Adler and Charles Van Doren put it rather well in the new edition of *How to Read a Book*:

Without external help of any sort, you go to work on the book. With nothing but the power of your own mind, you operate on the symbols before you in such a way that you gradually lift yourself from a state of understanding less to one of understanding more.

What are the conditions under which this kind of reading—reading for understanding—takes place? There are two. First, there is initial inequality in understanding. The writer must be "superior" to the reader in understanding, and his book must convey in readable form the insights he possesses and his potential readers lack. Second, the reader must be able to overcome this inequality in some degree, seldom perhaps fully, but always approaching equality with the writer.

As you acquire greater facility in the liberal arts here at St. John's, your ability to be your own teacher will be enhanced. We your tutors have designed a curriculum which experience demonstrates to be likely to improve your verbal skills—grammar, rhetoric, and logic, as the ancients put it—and your mathematical skills as well—the old quadrivium of arithmetic, geometry, music, and astronomy. These are the seven traditional liberal arts, and they are the tools of our understanding.

Members of the Class of 1976, on behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors and of the faculty, I welcome you to St. John's College. May you find here the challenge and excitement of learning under all of the teachers who collectively provide the answer to my opening question—the tutors who sit before you in their academic attire, the great teachers whose books you will read, your fellow students in seminars and tutorials, and finally each one of you as your self-teacher.

With respect to those who teach you, whether tutors, authors, or fellow students, I can do no better than to quote from an ancient Chinese philosopher, Hsün Tzu, who lived in the third century before the Christian era. He gives excellent advice for you to follow over the next four years at St. John's College:

I say that in learning nothing is more profitable than to associate with those who are learned, and of the roads to learning, none is quicker than to love such men.

SOCRATES, SENIOR TUTOR

By signing this historic Register, you of the Class of 1977 are now full-fledged members of St. John's College. Ours is a college with a long and distinguished tradition, one of which each of you may well be proud. The roster of names of its graduates is an impressive one, both in Maryland and in the nation—Brewer, Campbell, Chase, Claude, Dorsey, Duvall, Goldsborough, Hammond, Harwood, Key, Magruder, Parran, Pinkney, Randall, Ridgely, Ridout, Tuck, and Worthington. The careers they followed are likewise notable—governors, senators, congressmen, judges, professors, physicians, clergymen, military men, and businessmen.

According to our Polity, or constitution, St. John's College is understood to consist of the Board of Visitors and Governors, the faculty, the students, the staff, and the alumni. You can see, therefore, that your signature on the Register constitutes a life membership in this community. Obviously, you and your tutors are the two most important elements in the College, for you will be learning together and teaching each other over the four years ahead. As you await your first seminars, tutorials, and laboratories with understandable eagerness and trepidation, let me turn to one of your tutors for a measure of wisdom to guide you.

Tutors at St. John's are both young and old. Some are freshmen, like you, though they bring to their classrooms more years of study, experience, and maturity than are yet yours. Other tutors

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are older and have gained permanent tenure at St. John's. But still others, and probably the most important tutors, are those who participate in our seminars and tutorials through the books that they wrote and bequeathed to us. It is to one of these tutors that I turn for insights as we think together about the task before us.

This tutor is Socrates, who lived two and a half millenia ago in Athens and whose teaching is so fully recorded by Plato in the *Dialogues*. Socrates is emulated by most of us here, and although even the best of us falls far short, his example provides a standard to which all of us in this learning community can aspire.

You recall that Socrates was executed in 399 B.C. for allegedly corrupting the youth of Athens. In defense of his teaching Socrates said:

For I do nothing but go about persuading you all, old and young alike, not to take thought for your persons or your properties, but first and chiefly to care about the greatest improvement of the soul. I tell you that virtue is not given by money, but that from virtue comes money and every other good of man, public as well as private. This is my teaching, and if this is the doctrine which corrupts youth, I am a mischievous person.

First, let me cite the *Meno*, a dialogue in which Meno and Socrates discuss ἀρετή, a Greek word usually translated "virtue," but more accurately translated "excellence." Meno asked whether excellence is acquired by teaching or by practice and if by neither, whether it comes to man by nature. Socrates devotes most of the dialogue to trying to define excellence before he can think of answering Meno's question. At one point, Socrates seeks to prove his doctrine of recollection, that is, that each person is born with knowledge imbedded within him, and that it is simply the task of the teacher to help with the spontaneous recovery or recollection of this knowledge.

You will read the incident for seminar. An ignorant slave boy is shown a square drawn in the sand which is two feet on the side. He agrees that the area of the square is four feet. He is asked for the length of the side which will result in doubling the area of the square. His first answer is double the side. This, of course, produces a square of sixteen feet, four times the original one. Then

the slave boy falls back on a square three feet on the side. When Socrates shows him that this results in a square of nine feet instead of eight and asks again for the right answer, the boy replies, "Indeed, Socrates, I for one do not know." Socrates then asks Meno whether the boy ever would have inquired into or learned what he thought he knew until he had been shocked into the realization of his ignorance and hence had developed the desire to know.

This episode prompts Socrates to state his conviction "that we shall be better and braver and less helpless if we think that we ought to enquire, than we should have been if we indulged in the idle fancy that there was no knowing and no use in seeking to know what we do not know;—that is a theme upon which I am ready to fight, in word and deed, to the utmost of my power."

St. John's College is a place where we are all seeking to know, seeking to know through enquiry. We must be prepared to question everything and be willing to abandon our prejudices and preconceptions if our discussion proves them wrong. No one here should be afraid of showing ignorance, for consciousness of ignorance is the best stimulus to wanting to learn.

A second insight is found in the dialogue called *Crito*. Crito is a friend who visits Socrates in prison and tries to persuade him to escape to Thessaly instead of submitting to the sentence of death that has been pronounced under the laws of Athens. Crito argues that Socrates owes this to his friends, as well as to his own children. Socrates replies that he appreciates Crito's zeal and is prepared to consider the matter. He warns, however, that he is and always has been "one of those natures who must be guided by reason, whatever the reason may be which upon reflection appears to me to be the best." He goes on to say, "I cannot repudiate my own words: the principles which I have hitherto honored and revered I still honor, and unless we can at once find other and better principles, I am certain not to agree with you."

In the latter part of the dialogue, Socrates faces the issue by an imaginary conversation which he carries on with the laws of Athens. The laws argue that Socrates has all his life acquiesced in their government of him, and that to disobey them now, even though he might consider himself wrongly convicted, would constitute destruction of the laws. They conclude:

Listen, then Socrates, to us who have brought you up. Think not of life and children first, and of justice afterwards, but of justice first, that you may be justified before the princes of the world below. For neither will you nor any that belong to you be happier or holier or juster in this life, or happier in another, if you do as Crito bids. Now you depart in innocence, a sufferer and not a doer of evil; a victim, not of the laws but of men. But if you go forth, returning evil for evil, and injury for injury, breaking the covenants and agreements which you have made with us, and wronging those whom you ought least of all to wrong, that is to say, yourself, your friends, your country, and us, we shall be angry with you while you live and our brethren, the laws in the world below, will receive you as an enemy; for they will know that you have done your best to destroy us. Listen, then, to us and not to Crito.

At St. John's College you will search for basic understandings and principles, you will discover laws of nature and laws of God, you will live in a community governed by law, courtesy, and custom. The understandings, the laws, and the principles which you will question, examine, discuss, and affirm in your readings and your conversations must become the basis for your practical living. Unless this happens in the little world that is St. John's and in the larger world that surrounds you, your education here will have failed and you might better have saved your time, your energies, and your money. You do not need to come to St. John's if you bend before the winds of opportunism, avarice, and self-interest in the world at large.

There is a third insight in the allegory of the cave in the seventh book of Plato's *Republic*, a long dialogue devoted to justice, to the way in which men should govern themselves, and to the education of the philosopher kings who are deemed best able to assure the governance of a perfect state. You recall that Socrates imagines a cave in which prisoners are chained so that they cannot turn themselves about. Behind them figures move along a low parapet. A fire casts shadows of the figures and objects against the wall before the prisoners. Sounds and voices of the figures echo from the wall. For the prisoners the shadows and the echoes

are the only reality they know. Socrates describes the freeing of one of these men and his long ascent up to the mouth of the cave and out, where he sees successively shadows of real objects, reflections, the objects themselves, and, finally, the sun, source of light. Socrates compares this journey to the ascent of the soul by long and arduous labor into the intellectual realm, where the good, the true, and the beautiful, may finally be apprehended. He suggests that a person who has thus ascended would find himself most uncomfortable should he return to the world of shadows. Moreover, he would find it difficult to persuade his fellows, still chained in the cave, of the unreality of their existence and of the reality of the existence outside. Yet, Socrates insists that such a return is necessary:

The business of us who are the founders of the State will be to compel the best minds to attain that knowledge which we have already shown to be the greatest of all—they must continue to ascend until they arrive at the good; but when they have ascended and seen enough we must not allow them to do as they do now . . . they must be made to descend again among the prisoners in the den, and partake of their labours and honour, whether they are worth having or not.

For Socrates, the philosopher kings who had seen the beautiful, the just, the good, and the true were the ones who should become rulers of the state, even if most reluctant to govern. Such a state would be administered in a spirit quite different from states in which men fought with one another about shadows and were distracted from the good by a struggle for power.

At St. John's College you will be engaging in the long and arduous ascent from the world of shadows to the world of the intellect, where you will glimpse the good and the true. This is as it should be. Our society provides you with the leisure to use these four years in intellectual endeavor so that your mental powers will be enhanced and so that your understandings will be deepened. But this rightful preoccupation with the intellectual world should not blind you to the world around you which makes these four years possible. You should remember, for example, that your parents are people and that you have a continuing obligation to them even though you may rightly or wrongly decide that they are

living in the shadows. The wider community of city and state, of which this College is a small part, also deserve a measure of your attention. You remain a citizen of city, state, and nation even while the College usurps your energies and your interests. Finally, should you reach the intellectual heights which beckon so promisingly, like Plato's liberated prisoner, you may not remain out of the world of shadows. You must commit your life to the service of your fellows, whether in government, in the market place, in the classroom, in the church, or in your family. This is a debt, an obligation, and an opportunity which you cannot and should not evade.

Members of the Class of 1977, I salute you. On behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors and of the faculty, I welcome you to St. John's College. May you find here the excitement of the search for the good and the true. May you discover understandings and principles that will make your life meaningful. May you acquire the habit of enquiry but, at the same time, recognize the necessity for commitment to principle and to service.

TOCQUEVILLE, EQUALITY, AND EDUCATION

One hundred forty-five years ago, a young Frenchman by the name of Alexis de Tocqueville arrived in the United States ostensibly to study American prisons. He traveled over this young Republic for nine months, taking copious notes. His observations and impressions were then embodied in a work entitled *Democracy in America*, the first volume of which was published in France in 1835 and the second in 1840. Tocqueville may indeed speak to us in timely terms as we embark upon a new academic year at St. John's College.

Tocqueville's concern throughout the book is with liberty and freedom and what happens to them in a democracy. He was struck by one all-encompassing fact as he toured the United States—the general equality of condition of the people. From this fact he believed everything else was derived. He felt that a great social revolution was simply a providential fact in the world and that the revolution had reached its natural limits in the United States, albeit in peaceful ways. He sought in America “the image of democracy itself, with its inclinations, its prejudices, and its passions, in order to learn what we have to fear or to hope from its progress.”

In Tocqueville's words, “The man of the democratic age is extremely reluctant to obey his neighbor who is his equal; he refuses to acknowledge superior ability in such a person.” He is, on the one hand, independent, proud, and self-reliant. Or, the

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, August 29, 1976
Annapolis, September 12, 1976

other hand, he recognizes his individual weakness and impotency among his fellows. Hence he turns to centralized government for support and for the maintenance of conditions under which he can best live. Uniformity results from centralized government, and with uniformity comes surrender of individual liberties and freedom. The individual citizen willingly resigns himself to this loss because he persuades himself that since he has elected the centralized government himself he therefore is surrendering his freedom to himself.

Tocqueville believes that the greatest danger in a democracy like the United States lies in the threat of the tyranny of the majority. He says that "the very essence of democratic government consists in the absolute sovereignty of the majority," for nothing can resist it. Its moral authority is based upon "the notion that there is more intelligence and wisdom in a number of men united than in a single individual." Furthermore, "the interests of the many are to be preferred to those of the few." The unlimited power of government in a democracy like the United States alarmed Tocqueville. He felt that there were "inadequate securities" against tyranny, though he looked upon the press, upon lawyers, and upon voluntary associations as means of mitigating the effects of such tyranny.

My concern this afternoon is not so much with Tocqueville's political views as with his description of the philosophical method of Americans. The first paragraph of his second volume best delineates this:

To evade the bondage of system and habit, of family-maxims, class-opinions, and, in some degree, of national prejudices; to accept tradition only as a means of information, and existing facts only as a lesson to be used in doing otherwise and doing better; to seek for reason of things for one's self, and in one's self alone; to tend to results without being bound to means, and to aim at the substance through the form;—such are the principal characteristics of what I shall call the philosophical method of the Americans. But if I go further, and seek amongst these characteristics the principal one which includes almost all the rest, I dis-

cover that, in most of the operations of mind, each American appeals only to the individual effort of his own understanding.

Americans, he says, are an immensely practical people, little concerned with the theoretical or the supernatural. They rely upon their own powers of understanding and treat as superfluous and unimportant whatever transcends those powers. The exception is religion. Tocqueville felt that Christianity had "retained a strong hold on the public mind" and that it "is believed without discussion." In like manner, Americans seemed to him to accept a great number of moral truths originating in religion. Apart from these areas, the truth is sought by Americans through exercise of their own power of reason.

But here the circumstance of equality of social condition comes into play. Common beliefs are necessary to the preservation of a society. No man can forever be independent in demonstrating for himself all the truths of which he makes daily use. He must accept some beliefs upon the authority of others. An authority therefore becomes necessary. In an era of equality there is a lesser tendency to place credence in any one man or group of men. Instead, the opinion of the majority prevails. "The greater truth should go with the greater number." In the United States Tocqueville found that the majority undertook "to supply a multitude of ready-made opinions for the use of individuals who are thus relieved from the necessity of forming opinions of their own." He concluded that he knew of "no country in which there is so little independence of mind and real freedom of discussion as in America." The public, he writes, "does not persuade to certain opinions, but it enforces them, and infuses them into the intellect by a sort of enormous pressure of the minds of all upon the reason of each."

It is not my purpose to examine the validity of Tocqueville's analysis of the American character as he observed it in Jacksonian times, or to consider the contemporary applicability of his conclusions to the times of Ford, Reagan, and Carter. The question Is Tocqueville right? is one which will certainly occupy you for two or three seminars during your senior year—or even in the coffee shop this evening. Rather, let me consider what St. John's College proposes to do with you over the next four years, so that few of you, I trust, will spend your lives in that vast category of people whom

Tocqueville characterizes as "a flock of timid and industrious animals, of which the government is the shepherd."

St John's has an abiding faith in reason—in the capacity of the individual to analyze, to synthesize, to develop and test hypotheses, to speak and to listen—in short, to search for truth. It believes that such an effort is a cooperative endeavor and that conversation in seminars and out contributes importantly to that goal. Truth may lie with a minority, or even with an individual. Everything is subject to questioning, even though many matters may have to be accepted upon authority, albeit upon authority based upon reason.

St. John's College believes in learning for its own sake and not as a means to an end, even though that end might be as enticing as admission to graduate school or attainment of an attractive position in the market place. This College is concerned with the theoretical, with the impractical. Far from rejecting that which we cannot comprehend, we find in seemingly insoluble problems our greatest challenge. We believe that young minds and old need to be stretched, need to be challenged by the difficult and even the esoteric. The rewards are great, though the road may be rocky. If the mind can grasp theory and concept, if it can learn to deal with principles and universals, the practical can be surmounted, and life ahead can indeed be more satisfying and more stimulating for a St. Johnny.

Finally, this college believes in tradition and considers that it has a moral obligation to each of its students to acquaint him or her at first hand with those thinkers and writers who have contributed to our intellectual heritage. For us, tradition is not simply a means of information or a lesson to help us do better in the future. Mark Van Doren well describes the medium of liberal education as

that position of the past which is always present. It consists of the liberal arts, literary and mathematical, because they control thinking whenever thinking is done; and equally it consists of the great works in which meaning has been given to the ideal statement that human life is itself an art.

Van Doren proposes that the curriculum of every student should be devoted to two principal and simultaneous activities:

learning the arts of investigation, discovery, criticism, and communication, and achieving at first hand an

acquaintance with the original books, the unkillable classics, in which these miracles have happened.

Tradition, Van Doren writes,

is the medium through which we understand one another when communication takes place. It is the only way we have of knowing what we are. . . . [It] is the point where for the growing person past meets present and the two settle their differences.

Members of the Class of 1980, I salute you. On behalf of your tutors and your fellow students, I bid you warm welcome to St. John's College. All of us pledge you our conversation, our collaboration, our concern, and our commitment, as you join this community of learning. We wish you well over the four years that lie ahead—four years of learning the liberal arts of words and numbers, four years of coming to know your predecessors in the high intellectual tradition in which you stand.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE— A REVOLUTIONARY COLLEGE

It is a tradition at St. John's College for the president to honor the graduating seniors each May at a formal dinner. The matriculation roster of the class is read, and toasts are offered. By custom, the dean offers the final toast of the evening, and this is to the Republic. The toast is purposely ambiguous, since the dean might allude to any one or all of four Republics in the course of his remarks. The first of these is the *Republic* of Plato. This is the one you will be discussing in seminars. A second is the republic of letters. This is the republic comprised of the authors of the Great Books and of other works of literature. We too belong to that republic, though we are indeed junior citizens. The third republic is that to which all of us owe our political allegiance, the United States of America. The fourth, and the one about which I will speak this afternoon, is our own small republic, St. John's College, on its two campuses.

On the eve of the bicentennial celebration of the republic that is the nation, let us recall that a revolution brought about its birth. The sentiments contained in the Declaration of Independence were indeed revolutionary to most people in the eighteenth century. Think for a moment of the truths which the colonists held to be self-evident: "All men are created equal;" "They are endowed by their creator with certain unalienable rights;" "Among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness;" "Governments deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed." Or

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, August 24, 1974
Annapolis, September 8, 1974

recall the Constitution and the Bill of Rights; the system of checks and balances among the legislative, executive, and judicial branches; the guarantee of freedom of speech, of the press, of assembly, and of petition. This new nation which came into being from the thirteen British colonies in America has profoundly changed the course of history for many countries. Most of us fail to appreciate the revolutionary character of our nation and the model that it has provided for many people.

For thirty-seven years now this tiny republic of ours, St. John's College, has also been a revolutionary institution and a model for others, albeit in the educational world rather than the political. Chronologically, St. John's is a revolutionary college, for it was chartered in 1784, just as the new nation was being born. Appropriately enough, the four Maryland signers of the Declaration of Independence were involved in its beginnings: Charles Carroll of Carrollton, Samuel Chase, William Paca, and Thomas Stone. Four of the old dormitories on the Annapolis campus continue to bear these distinguished names. The true revolutionary character of St. John's College, however, lies not in its origin, but in its distinctive curriculum and in the fundamental premises upon which that curriculum is based. In 1937 the Board authorized a thoroughgoing and fearless restoration of the traditional liberal arts, when most colleges and universities were committed to the departmental system, to proliferating electives, to lectures and note-taking, and to vocational preparation, rather than to liberal education.

For nearly four decades St. John's College has been stoutly holding to the revolutionary tenets upon which the St. John's program is based. We believe that the primary task of a college must be to develop the thinking skills of each individual student, the skills which are the liberal arts, the tools of man's understanding. We believe that an important part of a liberal education is to "know the minutes of the previous meetings," to become acquainted with the great heritage of thought in which we stand. And we believe that education must be a philosophical enterprise, that all men by nature desire to know, and that part of the knowing is seeking to know why, even though the answer may be unattainable. We believe that every student must participate in his own education fully and actively, not passively. We believe that the best means to our ends are to read, to ponder, and to discuss the books written by some of the greatest teachers, thinkers, philos-

ophers, scientists, and theologians of all time. We believe that they speak to us and that we can speak to them in our seminars and tutorials. We try to make this college a community of learning in the finest sense, where students and tutors study and learn together, differentiated only by age and experience. All of these premises and principles make for an idealistic and utopian college. Together we all face the constant challenge of trying to make the revolutionary ideal an actuality.

Let me tell you how this paradoxically radical and conservative program came into being at St. John's. The seeds go back to the end of World War I, when John Erskine and others introduced seminars on notable books to occupy the minds and the time of American soldiers who were waiting in France for transport back to the United States. Later, in the 1920's, the reading and discussing of Great Books went on at Columbia University under Erskine and Mark Van Doren in the General Honors Course. Another of this College's forebears was Alexander Meiklejohn, with his challenging programs at Amherst and later at the experimental college at the University of Wisconsin.

Perhaps the greatest impetus to this educational ferment came from Robert Hutchins, who had become the fifth president of the University of Chicago in 1929 at the age of thirty. The following year he was joined by Mortimer Adler, one of Erskine's students at Columbia, who became his mentor and ally in trying to effect profound educational change at the University of Chicago. Adler and Hutchins began to lead a great books seminar composed of twenty entering freshmen. It apparently aroused great enthusiasm and interest throughout the university. Visitors to its sessions included such persons as Katherine Cornell, Orson Wells, Westbrook Pegler, and Gertrude Stein.

Somewhat later a new course entitled "Law 201" was organized for twenty college seniors headed for the law school. The first part of the course consisted of lectures and tutorials in grammar, logic, and rhetoric, and in mathematics. The second part, integrally related to the first, consisted of reading and seminar discussion of a limited number of books in history, philosophy, literature, and science. A third part, which never went beyond the planning stage, would have used laboratory research to understand the methods and techniques of science. Interestingly enough, Ed-

ward H. Levi, the current president of the University of Chicago, was one of the twenty students in this seminar.

Meanwhile, at the University of Virginia, a committee was appointed to consider honors courses. There was initial agreement that this specific problem could not be separated from the larger problem of students and courses in general. The curriculum was too diffuse and too specialized, it lacked any coherent design. The committee proceeded on the assumption that all students were entitled to a liberal education and that all students were capable of undertaking it. After six months a report was drafted by three of the committee's members, Scott Buchanan, Stringfellow Barr, and R. K. Gooch. The report recommended the founding of a small college within the University that would be devoted to liberal education. There would be two fully prescribed years of common study, much like Chicago's "Law 201." These years would be followed by two years of special honors work. There would be seminars, formal lectures, tutorials, and laboratories. Lectures were to be expositions of the various liberal arts, with particular attention to the way in which the arts were practiced by authors of the books read in the seminars. Tutorials were designed for more formal drill, for criticism of student papers, and for closer discussion of seminar readings. In the laboratory, students were to perform crucial experiments in the history of science. Nothing came of the report, since a new president and the faculty received it without enthusiasm.

Then, in 1936, Mr. Hutchins assembled a group of professors at Chicago and constituted them the Committee on the Liberal Arts. Their assignment was to reconsider the curricula of the college and the division of the humanities. The Committee reported to the dean of humanities, Richard McKeon, who had left Columbia for Chicago. Both Barr and Buchanan came from Virginia to join the Committee. Others on the Committee included McKeon, Adler, Catesby Taliaferro, Arthur Rubin, and Clarence Faust. There were frequent and continuing disagreements within the Committee, though all were united on the need to restore the tradition of the liberal arts. Ultimately, the differences could not be resolved, and the several members of the Committee held to their own positions as to what should be studied and how the teaching should proceed.

At this point, in the spring of 1937, little St. John's College in Annapolis, Maryland, was about to disappear in a morass of financial and other difficulties. It should be recalled that the College had been a military institution for some forty years, from the 1880's to the 1920's, with its graduates being commissioned directly into the armed forces of the United States. Then, in 1924, it became a conventional liberal arts college with emphasis upon colonial studies. A number of outstanding colonial properties were acquired, most of them on borrowed funds. The stock market crash of 1929 left the College in grave financial straits. Both the financial problems and certain academic irregularities prompted the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to withdraw the College's accreditation in 1936. The outlook was bleak indeed.

Chairman of the Board of Visitors and Governors at this time was Richard Cleveland, Baltimore lawyer and son of President Grover Cleveland. A fellow member of the Board, Francis Pickens Miller, told Cleveland and the other members of the Board about Scott Buchanan. Buchanan and Miller had been Rhodes Scholars at Oxford together. Miller learned from Buchanan about the Virginia plan and about the work of the Committee on the Liberal Arts. It seemed that this idea was just what St. John's College needed to give it new life and a new challenge for the future. The die was cast, and in June of 1937 the Board of Visitors and Governors appointed Stringfellow Barr president of the College and Scott Buchanan dean and head of instruction. Robert Hutchins became a member of the Board of Visitors and Governors, and Mortimer Adler became visiting lecturer in the liberal arts. The first class under the new program was admitted that fall and graduated in 1941. There were eighteen members, though not all of them had chosen to follow the new curriculum.

Public response and the response of others in the educational world was immediate and sometimes violent. The abolition of departments at St. John's College and the training of faculty members to teach across the board in disciplines other than their special competencies seemed to challenge the very foundations of American higher education. Both John Dewey and Sidney Hook wrote highly critical articles, the latter entitling one of them "Ballyhoo at St. John's." On the other hand, Walter Lippmann called St. John's "the seed bed of the American renaissance." *Life* maga-

zine published a picture story on the new program in the spring of 1940 entitled "The Classics Come into Their Own at Old St. John's." Milton Mayer wrote an article facetiously called "Socrates Crosses the Delaware" in *Harper's*. These latter two articles prompted many young men all over the United States to apply to St. John's as a live and challenging alternative to the fragmented curricula at most American colleges and universities. The Harvard report, *General Education in a Free Society*, brought out in the mid-1940's, drew more heavily on the experience of St. John's College than any other single factor in the shaping of its recommendations. This report prompted many colleges and universities throughout the country to turn to the general education movement in the late 1940's and early 1950's.

The revolutionary and innovative spirit of St. John's has produced significant changes over the past twenty-five years. In these remarks I shall not deal with the curriculum. Suffice it to say that we remain committed to the same premises and principles that were held by the founders. I should note certain modifications in the program—the introduction of music, the establishment of the preceptorial, the considerable change in the laboratory, and the elimination of a year of Latin and a year of German in favor of two years of Greek and two years of French.

Let me rather deal with certain other milestones in the College's history since the academic year 1949-50, the first year of my presidency. The College was different then. The student body at Annapolis numbered one hundred ninety-six, most of whom were World War II veterans. Twenty-seven tutors constituted the faculty, under the deanship of Jacob Klein. The first black student had been admitted the year before, a development deplored by many alumni. Parenthetically, one of my conditions for accepting the St. John's presidency was that the Board would not reopen this issue.

The very appearance of the campus was different. Tennis courts, defense shops, and temporary married student housing occupied the site of the future Key Memorial and Mellon Hall. The central heating plant was a "black hole of Calcutta" located beneath Koogle Hall, a small cottage on the present site of Campbell Hall. A giant smokestack rose ninety feet into the air and contributed liberally to the pollution of the town. Humphreys Hall was used for all laboratory work. Students habitually blamed the



"Humphreys factor" for any experiments which failed to arrive at anticipated conclusions. The budget of the entire College was only \$377,000. Tutors started teaching at \$3,000 a year and moved up by cautious steps to a maximum of \$5,000. And you will all be a little envious to learn that student fees were \$650 for tuition and \$600 for room and board!

The first major development was the adoption of the Polity of the College in the spring of 1950. This document is the constitution of St. John's College. It defines the members of the College as the Board, the faculty, the students, the staff, and the alumni. It sets forth the responsibilities and relationships of each. For the first time St. John's College had a clear set of laws to govern itself. I invite each of you to read the Polity, for we continue to function under its guidance and direction. But let me caution you not to expect a democracy. No college should pretend to be one, and St. John's is no exception. The beauty of the document which we evolved is its flexibility, for built into the Polity is a mandatory quinquennial review by the faculty and the Board, with students and others participating. Hence, the Polity has been able to change as circumstances have dictated. It has been an important factor in providing the stability which even a revolutionary college must have if the learning of all its members is to go forward in fruitful and effective ways. Indeed, it was one reason for the restoration of full accreditation by the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools in 1953.

The next revolutionary change in the College was the decision to admit women. It seemed to both the dean and me that discrimination should not be practiced and that the St. John's program should be open equally to men and women. The faculty concurred and recommended that the Board of Visitors and Governors give serious consideration to the possibility of admitting women in the fall of 1951. Without study by a committee of its own, the Board adopted the faculty's recommendation in December of 1950, and the fateful announcement was made that two hundred fifty-five years of male exclusiveness would come to an end. Interestingly enough, the announcement met with almost universal alumni approval, but students were outraged. They claimed that academic standards would drop, though I suspect the real cause of their ire was the suddenness and the unexpectedness of the announcement. In all candor, I must confess that students should

have been consulted. Indeed, they would have been had not the Board acted so precipitously. Miss Barbara Leonard was appointed first woman tutor and assistant dean, a position which she still holds. Women became full-fledged members of the faculty, with no distinction as to salary or perquisites. Women also became valued members of the Board of Visitors and Governors. St. John's College indeed anticipated the so-called women's liberation movement and the introduction of coeducation into many of our prestigious institutions by nearly two decades.

The next pioneering venture of St. John's College was the creation of the western campus at Santa Fe, New Mexico. In 1959 the College was invited by a group of citizens on the Monterey Peninsula in California to assist them in founding a new institution on the St. John's pattern. This never materialized for lack of funding, but some thirty-seven other invitations were received from all over the United States when the proposal for duplicating St. John's College became known. Student populations were burgeoning at the end of the 1950's, and pressures were on to accept a larger number of students. The faculty, the students, and the Board were united in their belief that the nature of the St. John's education would change radically if the size of the College grew to much over three hundred fifty students. I might note that I was wrongly suspected of championing growth to five hundred students at Annapolis. This resulted in my being burned in effigy before a Friday night lecture, an honor usually reserved for football coaches. Colonization, the solution that, I favored, seemed an ideal way to double enrollment and yet to maintain the essential smallness of the community.

I shall never forget my initial visit to Santa Fe in January of 1961, with Robert McKinney, publisher of the *Santa Fe New Mexican*, serving as my host. It was on that visit that John and Faith Meem offered the gift of land which is now the site of the western St. John's campus. A faculty committee subsequently visited the several principal prospective sites in early February of 1961—Santa Fe and, in California, Riverside, Claremont, and the Monterey Peninsula. The committee's unanimous recommendation favored Santa Fe. This was approved by the whole faculty and adopted by the Board of Visitors and Governors on February 22, 1961. Santa Fe was chosen because of the cultural orientation of the city, with its opera, its museums, its libraries, its artists, and its

writers. It was chosen too because of the proximity to the scientists in Los Alamos and in Albuquerque. Another major factor in the decision was the absence of any college independent of both church and state in the whole Southwest. Finally, I should confess that a local banker hazarded the guess that there were at least twenty millionaires in the area, so there seemed some prospect of finding the necessary funding. The new campus opened with eighty-four freshman students on October 1, 1964, just ten years ago this fall. St. John's, Santa Fe, is now a viable and functioning institution, which has attracted able tutors and students and which has earned for itself the respect and affection of the community. Through its Graduate Institute in Liberal Education each summer, it is reaching a broad national constituency, a rewarding extension of the St. John's program to elementary and secondary school teachers and to other adults.

Members of the Class of 1978, I salute you. On behalf of your fellow students, both the seniors who will be your tutors and the juniors who will be your fellows, I bid you a warm welcome to this revolutionary college. The four years ahead will be years of challenge, of frustration, of exhilaration, of hard work, and of reward. You stand in a long and honorable train of students going back to the eighteenth century, men and women who have later distinguished themselves in service to their fellow citizens and to their country. St. John's College is proud of them, as it is now proud of you. I bid you Godspeed!

THE DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

In this bi-centennial year, it seems appropriate that my remarks should be addressed to the Declaration of Independence, formally adopted by representatives of the American colonies in Congress assembled on July 4, 1776, just two hundred years prior to the end of this academic year.

I choose the Declaration of Independence in part because of its landmark position in our history. On its role there I do not plan to dwell. The document itself contains a long and detailed register of alleged abuses of royal power in justification of the action the colonial representatives were taking. It is an interesting fact that the four Maryland representatives who signed the Declaration were all to become active in the establishment of St. John's College about a decade later. All four are memorialized on the Annapolis campus today by twin dormitories named for them, Paca-Carroll House and Chase-Stone House.

But let us turn to the Declaration itself and, in accordance with St. John's custom, let us listen directly to what the document has to say.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

Matriculation Convocation: Santa Fe, August 27, 1975
Annapolis, September 7, 1975

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed; that, whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or to abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown, that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they are accustomed. But, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their right, it is their duty, to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former systems of government. The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having, in direct object, the establishment of an absolute tyranny over these states. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world:

I pass over the facts so submitted and read the last paragraph of the Declaration.

We, therefore, the representatives of the United States of America, in general Congress assembled, appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions, do, in the name, and by the authority of the good people of these colonies, solemnly publish and declare, that these united colonies are, and of right

ought to be, free and independent states; that they are absolved from all allegiance to the British Crown, and that all political connection between them and the state of Great Britain is, and ought to be, totally dissolved; and that, as free and independent states, they have full power to levy war, conclude peace, contract alliances, establish commerce, and to do all other acts and things independent states may of right do. And, for the support of this declaration, with a firm reliance on the protection of Divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honour.

As I have read, I hope that each of you has admired the prose of Thomas Jefferson. He was obviously a master in the use of language. The phrasing is felicitous, the words are selected for their precision in conveying his meanings. Consider, if you will, the relative ineffectiveness of substituting other words and phrases for those Jefferson used. Suppose the first sentence had started as follows: When in the history of mankind, one people is forced to break the ties that have bound them to another and to adopt among the nations of the world an independent and equal status, one which is their just due according to the laws of nature and of God. Contrast this with the Declaration itself:

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another, and to assume, among the powers of the earth, the separate and equal station to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes which impel them to the separation.

And listen to other passages: "they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights, . . . That, to secure these rights, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed, . . . organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. . . . Such has been the patient sufferance of these colonies; . . . let facts be submitted to a candid world. . . . appealing to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our inten-

tions, . . . these united colonies are, and of right ought to be, free and independent states."

The language of the Declaration elicits our admiration and justifies our study and emulation. Here at St. John's College you will spend four years in language tutorials learning what language is and learning more about your own language and how to use it with precision, with clarity, and with beauty. Your models will be the books and the documents that are themselves exemplars of the liberal arts. Your best efforts will probably never match those of the authors of the books. This is a frustration that you will have to learn to live with, for essays must still be produced and submitted to your tutors whether or not you are satisfied with your efforts.

But there is a second reason for discussing the Declaration of Independence with you today. It is part of the Great Conversation in our western world, for it draws upon ideas of men who went before and in turn it has contributed to the thinking of men who came after. Without any exhaustive discussion of where Jefferson's ideas came from, let me cite examples of books and treatises familiar to him, works which helped to establish the principles underlying the Declaration.

The first in chronological order is *An Essay Concerning the True Original Extent and End of Civil Government*, which John Locke published in England in 1690. Locke writes that "the natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, . . . but to have only the law of Nature for his rule." In treating the beginning of political societies, he then states:

Men being as has been said, by nature all free, equal, and independent, no one can be put out of this estate and subjected to the political power of another without his own consent, which is done by agreeing with other men, to join and unite into a community for their comfortable, safe, and peaceable living, one amongst another, in a secure enjoyment of their properties, and a greater security against any that are not of it. . . . And thus every man, by consenting with others to make one body politic under one government, puts himself under an obligation to every one of the society to submit to the determination of the majority, and to be concluded by it; or else this original compact, whereby he with others incorporates into one society, would signify nothing,

and be no compact if he be left free and under no other ties than he was in before in the state of Nature.

Locke argues that it is "reasonable and just I should have a right to destroy that which threatens me with destruction." Anyone attempting to get another into his absolute power puts himself in a state of war with him. "For," he writes, "I have reason to conclude that he who would get me into his power without my consent would use me as he pleased when he had got me there, and destroy me too when he had a fancy to do it; for nobody can desire to have me in his absolute power unless it be to compel me by force to that which is against the right of my freedom—i.e. make me a slave." Hence, in Locke's terms, the British King of 1776, in taking away "the freedom belonging to those of that society or commonwealth"—namely the colonies—"must be supposed to design to take away from them everything else, and so be looked on as in a state of war."

Locke realized full well that there might be controversies between a prince and some of his people. At another point in his essay he suggests that "the proper umpire in such a case should be the body of the people." "But," he writes, "if the prince . . . decline that way of determination, the appeal then lies nowhere but to Heaven." Recall that last paragraph of the Declaration wherein the representatives in Congress assembled appealed "to the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions."

A second work familiar to Jefferson, which speaks to the subject of government, is Montesquieu's *The Spirit of the Laws*, which appeared in Geneva in 1748. Montesquieu writes:

Laws, in their most general signification, are the necessary relations arising from the nature of things. In this sense all beings have their laws: the Deity His laws, the material world its laws, the intelligences superior to man their laws, the beasts their laws, man his laws.

He stresses the relation of God to the universe "as Creator and Preserver." He goes on to say that "the laws by which He created all things are those by which He preserves them. He acts according to these rules, because He knows them; He knows them, because He made them; and He made them, because they are in relation to His wisdom and power."

Montesquieu wrote that "the government most conformable to nature is that which best agrees with the humour and disposition of the people in whose favour it is established." He called law "human reason" and proposed that the "political and civil laws of each nation ought to be only the particular cases in which human reason is applied." They ought to be in relation to the climate of the country and its population, "to the degree of liberty which the constitution will bear; to the religion of the inhabitants, to their inclinations, riches, numbers, commerce, manners, and customs." Here was a strong argument for a different government and set of laws for a people in completely different circumstances from those in the homeland of England.

Still a third forerunner to the Declaration is Jean Jacques Rousseau, whose book entitled *The Social Contract* appeared in France in 1762 and was known to Jefferson. He stated the fundamental problem of government to be

to find a form of association which will defend and protect with the whole common force the person and goods of each associate, and in which each, while uniting himself with all, may still obey himself alone, and remain as free as before.

The social contract provided the solution. Under the contract, Rousseau wrote, "Each of us puts his person and all his power in common under the supreme direction of the general will, and, in our corporate capacity, we receive each member as an indivisible part of the whole." These two passages speak directly to that section of the Declaration which describes governments as "deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."

So at St. John's you will enter into the great conversation which begins with Homer, Plato, and the Bible and comes down to Einstein, Jung, and Mann in the twentieth century. You will read what the authors themselves wrote, not books about books. You will try to understand and talk to them in company with your fellow learners—both tutors and students—but without the midwifery of professors or experts.

Finally, there is a third way in which the Declaration can contribute to our common learning at St. John's College. It, like all the books in the College's program, challenges us to question its premises, its statements, and its conclusions. In so doing we do

not aim to produce sceptics here. Instead, we commit ourselves to the search for truth, wherever that may lead. We question in order to understand. We examine in order to reject or affirm. Our tools for this great venture are the liberal arts, those skills of the mind which the St. John's program is designed to foster.

Here are some questions which we might pose in seminar or in the coffee shop after a thoughtful reading of the Declaration:

What is a self-evident truth? Would all men accept such a truth?

Since men are manifestly different in their attributes, their talents, and their abilities, in what sense are they "created equal"?

What do we understand by "happiness" and its "pursuit"? Are there other important rights which should be included with or substituted for "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness"?

Is there a "duty" as well as a "right" to throw off a government guilty of "a long train of abuses and usurpations"?

What is tyranny, and do the "injuries and usurpations" of the King constitute a considered effort on his part to establish "an absolute tyranny over these states"?

Is the "authority of the good people of these colonies" sufficient to validate the Declaration? Why appeal to God as "the Supreme Judge of the world for the rectitude of our intentions"?

Is a declaration of independence tantamount to a declaration of war? Can peaceful means achieve the same end?

The Declaration is a political document. The questions we might consider are all related to the general considerations of how men should govern themselves. This is but one of many persisting human questions which the books raise and to which you will address yourselves at St. John's. These questions will have to do with self, with man, with God, with the world around us, with right and wrong, with peace and war. Answers will differ from

book to book. All must be examined in the light of reason and experience. All must be questioned. Indeed, it is a vital and necessary part of our western tradition that the tradition itself always be subject to questioning. The goal remains to search for truth, to discover principles and a philosophy to live by. Remember that there must also be commitment—that you must ultimately decide “This I believe” and act accordingly.

Members of the Class of 1979, I salute you. Having signed this historic Register, you are now in fact members of St. John's College. On behalf of all of us—tutors, associates, students, and staff—I bid you welcome to this small community. Over the years ahead I cherish for you the exhilaration of learning, accompanied as it inevitably must be by hard work and even a measure of frustration. A liberal education is not easy, but it is infinitely rewarding. Just as the Declaration of Independence started the colonists on the road to political freedom, so your exposure here to the liberal arts can begin to free you to live as men and women should—intelligently, imaginatively, humbly, justly, and responsibly.

ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE— FORTY YEARS

Forty years ago this fall the Class of 1941, seventy-four strong, matriculated at St. John's College in Annapolis. Of this number, a brave twenty chose the New Program in the liberal arts, which a bold president and dean had brought to the venerable but ailing college that summer. The other fifty-four chose to follow a safe and conservative road by opting for the regular elective program. Four years later, seven of the New Program pioneers received bachelor degrees, as did ten from the Old Program. But even these ten had been exposed to seminars and tutorials in their senior year. Thus was completed the transition of St. John's College from its traditional elective curriculum to the single course of study which we all follow today.

Now that four decades have elapsed since the Board of Visitors and Governors wisely invited Stringfellow Barr and Scott Buchanan to assume the presidency and the deanship of the College and to bring their Virginia plan to Annapolis in the summer of 1937, some observations may be in order. Let me start by quoting from *The Nineteen Forty-One Yearbook*, in which members of the initial class set forth the three fundamental goods they felt they had derived from their studies:

We have gained at least beginners' skills in the intricate and difficult art of dialectic. . . . To be a good citizen and an intelligent man nothing is more important than the ability to locate a problem, reduce it to its parts and

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make a rational choice among the possible alternatives according to the real values involved. This is the definition of prudence, a virtue which we certainly don't yet possess since it is based on experience as much as on understanding. Even though we don't have the experience we do have a grasp of the principles that will make the acquisition of that experience a more vital and intelligible thing than it would be without them.

The second good might be described as the discovery of the order and unity of the arts and sciences. The relations that obtain between the demonstrative and natural sciences, between them and metaphysics and theology, and the incidence of the liberal arts on the fine arts and the useful arts—the study of these matters has given us an order and purpose in our own thinking that will be both useful and indispensable when we begin to participate actively in the chaotic and confused life that characterizes the world we live in today.

Finally, from the second good follows the third: the realization of the vastness and complexity of human thought. This feeling confirms in us the truth of the ancient Socratic thesis that the greatest wisdom is to know that one doesn't know. We are young; we have just begun to think and live. There is much to think about—much to do.

The program itself has not remained static over the period, but the College has never deviated from its basic philosophy or from its reliance upon the seminar-tutorial method of teaching. Books have been added to the reading list or replaced, as they have been found to be more or less useful as grist for the seminar discussions. It has been difficult to dispel the popular view that the College, in its infinite wisdom, has decided which hundred are the greatest books that have ever been written. I recall, with some amusement, the prominent place which the *New York Times* gave some years ago to the news of the inclusion of Jane Austen in the list. She was hailed as the first woman writer to achieve such recognition. The remarkable fact is that so many of the books have remained among the seminar readings since 1937.

A notable change has occurred in the language program. Originally, a year each was devoted to the study and translation of Greek, Latin, German, and French. By comparing the four, the faculty believed that students gained greater insight into the intricacies of language in general, if not proficiency in any one. Experience demonstrated that a year was insufficient time to familiarize students with one of the languages. Hence, first Latin was dropped in favor of two years of Greek. Then in 1961 German yielded to two years of French. Greek was retained because it was usually unknown to entering freshmen, because its alphabet was different, because its grammar was helpful in learning English, and because the seminar books of the first year had been written in Greek. By contrast, French was a language many students had already studied. It therefore lent itself to more advanced discussions. Moreover, the literature available in French seemed better for the College's purposes than that in German.

Music became a required part of the curriculum in the fall of 1950, when a freshman tutorial was introduced by the late Victor Zuckerkindl, whose book we still use. Music was looked upon as pure rhetoric, that is, it moves us without any reference outside itself through verbal signs. The hope was to promote musical literacy within the student body. In the fall of 1963, the music tutorial was moved to the sophomore year. Now, the instruction committee has decided that it is to be the fourth major part of the curriculum of the sophomore year, as the biology laboratory shifts in part to the first and in part to the fourth year.

Of all parts of the curriculum, the laboratory has drawn most criticism and has been most frequently revised. Originally, crucial landmark experiments were reproduced by the students in chronological order. Soon, however, this plan yielded to one in which the College wrote its own manuals, and blocks of time were devoted to the theory of measurement, biology, mechanics, optics, electricity, atomic theory, and the theory of relativity. The recent action of the instruction committee reduces from four to three years the work in the laboratory. Seniors will now be able to do molecular biology with more confidence and insight, and the physics may be done in a more exploratory and less dogmatic way. Yours is the first class to experience this new program.

Finally, mention should be made of the introduction of preceptorials in the fall of 1962. For two months in the late fall and

early winter of the junior and senior years, seminars are suspended in favor of small, elective preceptorial groups of six to eight students under the leadership of one tutor. The purpose is to invite and guide the student to a more thorough and responsible study of a single text or a group of texts concerned with a specific question or subject. Junior or senior essays sometimes result from the work in the preceptorial.

A second observation about St. John's College some forty years later would have to be that Walter Lippmann's extravagant prediction has not been realized that the College would become the seed bed of the American renaissance. Far from achieving a role of leadership back to the liberal arts, St. John's has had to fight valiantly against the educational establishment with its departments, its specialization, and its impersonality. True, there have been notable cases of institutions which have made available optional programs patterned after the St. John's program. Examples of these are the General Program of Liberal Studies at the University of Notre Dame and the Integrated Liberal Arts Curriculum at St. Mary's College in California. The one institution which has emulated St. John's most completely is Thomas Aquinas College in southern California, where any St. Johnny might feel at home with tutors, seminars, tutorials, and don rags, both as to terminology and as to substance.

It is St. John's College itself that has best propagated its faith. In 1961, the Board of Visitors and Governors voted to create a second campus in Santa Fe, New Mexico, to make this education more widely available to a burgeoning student population. The second college opened its doors on October 1, 1964, and has now completed thirteen years in the Southwest. An excellent faculty has been assembled, many with prior teaching and learning experience at Annapolis. A superb physical plant was designed and erected on the northern slope of Monte Sol, with commanding views of three mountain ranges. Students move back and forth between the two campuses, experiencing the best of two worlds. Creation of the second college has enabled St. John's to enroll some two hundred freshmen each year, ten times the number in that first class of the New Program in the fall of 1937. And yet the College remains small and highly personal with one tutor for every eight or nine students. Moreover, there is the Graduate Institute in Liberal Education, conducted each summer on the New Mex-

ico campus. Here teachers and other adults learn something of the matter and the manner of the St. John's program, and the teachers adapt both to their teaching at the secondary and college levels. St. John's College has proved to be the tiny grain of mustard seed in American education, for these teachers and St. John's graduates have carried the philosophy and the practices of the College into a wide range of institutions. It is too soon to make any optimistic predictions, but the concern of the National Endowment for the Humanities and the professed desire of many colleges and universities to return to the basic liberal arts and to introduce common core learning may prove to be good omens.

My last observation has to do with the infinitely wide range of professions and careers followed by the more than sixteen hundred graduates of St. John's College under the present program. At the risk of charges of discrimination, let me cite men from each of the first five classes. You will recall that St. John's remained all male until its doors were opened to women in the fall of 1951.

From the initial Class of 1941, William Hatfield became a doctor and is now director of the Lord Fairfax Health District of Virginia, and Henry Cabbage is a consultant to the Submarine Electromagnetic Commission. In the Class of 1942, Boswell Childs is a patent attorney in the Office of Naval Research, Albert Poppiti is executive vice president of the Delaware Contractors Association, William Darkey a St. John's tutor in Santa Fe, and Robert Sutton the rector of St. James Church in Baltimore. From the Class of 1943, Francis Mason is assistant director of the Pierpont Morgan Library in New York, Adrian Mayer a professor in the School of Oriental and African Studies at the University of London, and A. Leonard Slafkosky the scientific adviser to the Commandant of the Marine Corps. Of the Class of 1944, one might cite William Brubeck, Foreign Service officer, Vernon Derr, atmospheric physicist with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration in Boulder, Colorado, and Ahmet Ertogun, chairman of Atlantic Recording Corporation. From the Class of 1945, Rogers Albritton is professor of philosophy at the University of California in Los Angeles, William Goldsmith professor of history at Brandeis University, Morris Parslow professor of French at Grinnell College, John Mack president of the Carter Division of Carter-Wallace, Inc., and Charles Nelson a management consultant and principal of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell and Company in New York City.

Next I shall turn to the Class of 1950, since its members were the first whose diplomas I signed. Fredrick Beardsley is a minister in Richmond, Jack Carr the historical-cultural liaison officer in the Maryland Department of Economic and Commercial Development, Bernard Clorety a hydrographer with the Sacramento Municipal Utility District, and Richard Congdon director of the Northern Illinois University Press. Matson Ewell serves as dean of the Middle School at the Harley School in Rochester, New York, Bernard Fleischmann as dean of the School of Humanities of Montclair (New Jersey) State College. James Frame is director of programming development for IBM in Palo Alto, California, and Robin Garland teaches mathematics at the Fieldston School in New York. Robert Goldwin was dean on the Annapolis campus, then special assistant to President Ford, and is now a member of the staff of the American Enterprise Institute.

Theodore Hendricks is a reporter for the Baltimore *Sunpapers*, Ralph Herrod registrar of the New School for Social Research, and George Hofrichter president of the Parish Press in New York. Ranlet Lincoln is dean of University Extension at the University of Chicago, Thomas Meyers a physics teacher at the Bridgeton High School in New Jersey, George Miller professor of librarianship at the University of New Mexico, Thomas Simpson tutor on the Santa Fe campus, John Sterrett publications editor for the Convair Division of General Dynamics, Peter Whipple auditor with the International Monetary Fund, John Williams realtor in San Francisco, Myron Wolbarsht professor of ophthalmology and bio-medical engineering at Duke University Medical Center, and Marvin Zetterbaum professor of political philosophy at the University of California in Davis.

Finally, not to slight either women graduates or the Santa Fe campus, let me turn to those women who received their bachelor's degrees in the Class of 1968, the first class on the western campus. Margaret Blum is a commercial craftsman with the American Telephone and Telegraph Company in Denver, Bettina Briggs is an attorney in Taunton, Massachusetts, and Vicki Brown is an editorial assistant at the Institute for the Translation of Chinese Tripitaka in Taiwan. Augusta Goldstein teaches eighth grade social studies in Walnut, California, and Anne Harlan is reference librarian at the Hamden Public Library in Connecticut. Vida Kazemi has been in the consular section of the American Embassy in

Teheran, Marilynne Wills Schell is an elementary teacher in Storrs, Connecticut, Constance Weigle Mann is an assistant librarian at the Lawrenceville School in New Jersey. She, Ellin Barret Ballard, Sansi Girard Agnew, and Antigone Phalares Moore are all housewives.

The remarkable point about this long and eclectic recital is that all of these St. John's graduates, whether from the 1940's or the 1970's, whether at Annapolis or at Santa Fe, had essentially the same undergraduate education. The thorough grounding in the liberal arts made possible a wide-ranging choice of graduate study and of life careers. As Sharon Bishop, of the Class of 1965, an associate in a large management consulting firm, writes, "I have used the St. John's experience throughout my academic and business career. . . . The ability to think clearly, insightfully, and incisively has been invaluable and, quite literally, money in my pocket." Rosalie Levine Boosin, of the Class of 1960, a New York teacher, states that "the emphasis on logic, comprehension, and application of principles, along with the development of verbal ability, is so superior in the St. John's curriculum that a St. John's graduate is better prepared for employment than graduates of most conventional colleges." But quite apart from the careers which St. John's alumni follow, it is apparent to me that the experience here with books and balances, with tutors and fellow students, has made for more meaningful and satisfying lives in those whom St. John's College has touched over these past four decades.

Members of the Class of 1981, I salute you. On behalf of the Board of Visitors and Governors, the faculty, the staff, and the students, I welcome you most warmly to St. John's College. I hope you will find rewarding the search for the good and the true. I hope you will discover understandings and principles that will make your lives meaningful. I hope you will acquire the habit of enquiry. I hope that you will commit yourselves to service to your fellow citizens in this republic, whatever your future field of endeavor may prove to be.

IN RETROSPECT

Thirty years have now passed since I entered St. John's College at Annapolis with sixty-seven members of the Class of 1953. This fall two hundred members of the Class of 1983 swell the ranks of the College, but now on two campuses instead of one. Since this will be my final matriculation convocation, I trust that I may be granted indulgence for a nostalgic review of the three decades during which St. John's College has indeed been my life.

To begin at the beginning, how had I heard about St. John's College and what prompted me to leave the security of the Department of State for a small struggling institution on the banks of the Severn River? My introduction to St. John's was probably as haphazard as that of a number of you. Casual mention of my name at a New York dinner party precipitated me into consideration for the presidency of the College. In the summer of 1949, I received an exploratory note and telephone call from Richard Cleveland, a Baltimore lawyer who was then chairman of the St. John's Board of Visitors and Governors. A visit from him followed, and I heard the long and intricate history of St. John's College from its founding as King William's School, but more particularly from the introduction of its present curriculum in 1937. I shall not forget the family dinner at our Chevy Chase home that evening. In an effort to make conversation of interest to our two small daughters, Mr. Cleveland remarked that his family once lived in Washington. When I asked where and he answered "1600 Pennsylvania Ave-

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nue," I suddenly realized that our visitor was the son of Grover Cleveland, twenty-second President of the United States. Mr. Cleveland was persuasive and challenging, but it took several trips to Annapolis before the Board elected me and I accepted the St. John's presidency, at an annual salary of \$6,500, plus perquisites, on September 17, 1949.

And why did I come? That is a legitimate question for me or for any other freshman. What fascinated and attracted me was the St. John's program. It seemed to embody so much of what I had missed in my own undergraduate education at Yale College—a carefully planned curriculum instead of the elective system, reading original books instead of textbooks, discovering the interrelatedness of the fields of knowledge instead of having my learning neatly categorized by departments, full participation in classes through dialectic and discussion instead of lectures, note-taking, and boning for examinations, learning as a cooperative venture instead of a competitive one. For the first time I came to understand the liberal arts as liberating intellectual skills rather than subject matter courses. Here my great debt was to Mark Van Doren, whose small volume *Liberal Education* was published in 1943, when the country was preoccupied with World War II. Let me commend this to all of you, even though it is not on the list of Great Books which we read here. It contains a superb discussion of the liberal arts and their role in an education. Van Doren's book was supplemented for me by several conversations with one of the great architects and teachers of the St. John's program, the late Jacob Klein, Russian scholar and philosopher, whose appointment to the deanship was my first official act.

But to be completely honest, part of the attraction which the position held for me was its challenge. For such an exciting and significant educational venture there simply had to be a promising future. It deserved it, and I hoped that I might be the one to give it administrative and financial stability, to see it prosper and have its philosophy and methods spread. Perhaps I was a gambler, for the odds appeared slim at best. There were twenty-seven tutors and a hundred ninety-six students, mostly veterans, all male. The first black student had come the year before, to the consternation of many alumni, but I made it a condition of my acceptance that the issue would not be raised anew. It will grieve all of you to learn that tuition came to \$650 for the year, room and board to another \$600,

just about one-fifth of current charges. The entire college budget totaled only \$377,446; the tutors' salaries started at \$3,000 and advanced with seniority to a maximum of \$5,000. The college endowment amounted on paper to a quarter of a million dollars, most of it accounted for by an old house and a note receivable from current funds. Its yield was less than \$2,000 a year. Finally, the College was confronted with mortgage indebtedness of \$168,900 and with the thirteen-year refusal of the Middle States Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools to restore St. John's accreditation.

Within four years accreditation had been regained, even though enrollment had by then declined to a hundred thirty-three students. There were hopeful signs. The Polity of the College had been adopted in 1950, a document defining the responsibilities and relationships of all parts of the College community. A new heating plant had been constructed so that tutors and students no longer shivered several times a winter as ancient tubes had to be replaced in decrepit coal-burning boilers. The College's indebtedness had been cleared, and a modest endowment was building, thanks to a matching challenge grant from Paul Mellon's Old Dominion Foundation. Most important, a significant policy change was approved by the Board in December of 1950. Women were admitted to a college that had been a male bastion for two hundred fifty-five years. Barbara Leonard became the first woman tutor and assistant dean. Strangely, alumni approved of coeducation, but many students were outraged. The prediction of male St. Johnnies was that the level of the conversations and the standards of the classroom would decline. Neither dire outcome resulted. Instead, women performed superbly at St. John's, and I was pleased that we could show the way to my own alma mater and others in the Ivy League, as well as to our uniformed neighbor beyond the wall at Annapolis.

The balance of the 1950's were exciting times. Enrollment grew to two hundred eighty by the fall of 1960, the faculty to thirty-six, and the endowment to \$6,000,000. Campbell Hall, the first women's dormitory, was completed in 1954; the Carroll-Barrister House was moved on campus from Main Street a year later. The physical plant was handsomely augmented by the Francis Scott Key Memorial Auditorium and Mellon Hall in 1958. President Dwight Eisenhower spoke at the dedication, and Mark Van Doren

and Paul Mellon were made honorary fellows of the College. For several years St. John's contracted with the Department of Labor to orient foreign nationals visiting the United States in the labor field. In the outside world, I helped found Historic Annapolis, served as president of the Anne Arundel County Board of Education, and conducted intellectual life conferences for college presidents and deans as chairman of the Commission of Liberal Education of the Association of American Colleges. But a new day was to dawn.

In November of 1959 Milton Mayer, publicist and parent of a St. John's senior, sat with me in the coffee shop and asked whether St. John's College would assist a group of citizens on the Monterey Peninsula in founding a college on the St. John's model. I visited the area several times in 1960, and it soon became apparent that nothing would happen unless St. John's took the initiative. As the year progressed, alternate sites in California were proposed in addition to the one overlooking Point Lobos and the Pacific Ocean—the old Mission Inn at Riverside and a two-block area in the Claremont College complex. Then *Time* ran an article in December telling of the College's interest in a second campus. Thirty-seven invitations and proposals from coast to coast flooded my office. One of these was from Santa Fe, New Mexico, proposed as our site by Robert M. McKinney, former St. John's Board member, then United States ambassador to Switzerland. During my initial visit to Santa Fe, in January of 1961, John Gaw Meem, retired architect, and his wife entertained at a luncheon in my honor and offered to give land which they owned to St. John's, should Santa Fe be selected as the site. This city was the recommendation of a faculty committee which visited the four principal locations a fortnight later. The faculty concurred, and on February 22, 1961, the Board of Visitors and Governors voted to attempt to open a second St. John's campus in Santa Fe, New Mexico, in the fall of 1964. The reasons for the selection were the cultural orientation of the community, the proximity of scientists at Los Alamos and Albuquerque, the potential support in the area, and the absence of any college independent of church and state in the entire Southwest. The College saw in this colonization an opportunity to double its enrollment without changing its ideal size of three hundred to three hundred fifty students. It envisioned helpful educational interplay between the two campuses as well. Paren-

thetically, I might note that students in Annapolis thought that I was recommending to the Board a growth of that campus to five hundred students, which they vigorously opposed. This gave me the doubtful distinction of being burned in effigy.

St. John's College in Santa Fe was opened on schedule, October 1, 1964, with eighty-four freshmen constituting the student body. Initially, accreditation carried over from the eastern campus, but within five years Santa Fe was accredited on its own by the North Central Association of Colleges and Secondary Schools. Incidentally, that accreditation was renewed this summer for another ten-year period. The area of the western campus grew to three hundred and ten acres. Its physical plant originally consisted of Santa Fe Hall, the classroom building, Evans Science Laboratory, the Peterson Student Center, and the upper dormitory complex. In 1965 the lower dormitories and the infirmary were added, in 1971 the administration building, and in 1974 the Sternberger-Weis Music and Fine Arts Building. I guess that I should confess to some qualms about having my office in Weigle Hall, generous as the Board was to give the administration building my name. I always thought that a person should be dead to enjoy such an honor.

In the summer of 1966 a new venture was undertaken. Laurence Berns, tutor, and Robert Goldwin, a 1950 graduate later to become dean at Annapolis, undertook the planning for a post-graduate summer program at Santa Fe, to be known as the Graduate Institute in Liberal Education. The Institute itself opened in the summer of 1967, with thirty-three students. Its goal was to make available to teachers and other adults a graduate version of the St. John's curriculum, together with the College's seminar-tutorial teaching methods. Over the years some two hundred and sixty-seven master's degrees have been awarded. Today, over a hundred adults enroll, many of them accompanied by their families. Children abound, and wives enjoy the luxury of dining without servitude in the kitchen. A branch of the Institute now functions at Annapolis, and there is a small year-round program at Santa Fe. The outreach of the College through the Institute has been notable.

The venerable eastern campus has survived the first fifteen years of a dual college situation remarkably well. Enrollment has burgeoned to nearly four hundred students, perhaps a tenth

higher than it should be. The faculty Greats of yesteryear are gone, tutors who established the College's high academic reputation over the early decades. The challenge of emulating them now rests with a remarkable group of seasoned and intelligent faculty members, both east and west, who range widely in the program and who possess a vital concern for the learning of each student. Ancient buildings at Annapolis have been renovated, and a small architectural gem added, the Harrison Health Center. Now St. John's is about to claim matching state funds to rejuvenate and add to Randall Hall, dormitory and dining hall, and Paca-Carroll House, a mid-nineteenth century abode for students. Final plans for both structures are presently being drawn by the architects. I hope that I can promise lively construction activity soon to those of you on the eastern campus.

This is my thirty-first and final year as president of St. John's College. I will not be here in 1983 to sign your diplomas. A presidential search committee is hard at work examining the credentials of some two hundred men and women, brave enough, or far-sighted enough, or even brash enough to want to preside over two campuses separated by eighteen hundred miles, five hours by air. Presidential search is obviously a much more complicated process than that when I was chosen in 1949. I can still recall my wife standing on our front lawn at Chevy Chase awaiting my return with our two small daughters from a Saturday morning trip to the Washington Zoo. "Hurry and get changed," she called. "You have just been elected president of St. John's College, and we have to drive over there so you can meet the Board." Life was simpler then.

But why have I stayed for thirty years? Has it been worth it? The answer is an unequivocal yes. In few colleges or universities could the president have continued with his own liberal education—as I did by co-leading seminars, teaching a mathematics tutorial, and attending Friday night lectures. In few other places could there have been the opportunity to know students so well. All of you have kept me young more than you have aged me—though I have to confess that my memory for names deserted me somewhere between the two campuses. Administrative problems have presented a kaleidoscope of knotty challenges. People have been both complicated and rewarding to work with and for—whether Board members, tutors, staff, students, or alumni. Even the fund-raising



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has been exciting—meeting new and interesting people and offering them the satisfaction of giving for an education that both they and I could believe in and to which we could commit ourselves. These years have been a period of stewardship at Annapolis, of preserving and nourishing an historic campus and an educationally significant idea. They have offered an opportunity given to few men and women to create a new college, at once a paradigm of beauty and a worthy replica of St. John's back in Maryland.

But my lasting satisfaction comes from observing the wonderful changes that take place in ever new generations of St. Johnnies as they experience the pleasures and the rigors of the St. John's program. In the words of the College's eighteenth-century Charter, the goal is "to train up and perpetuate a succession of able and honest men for discharging the various offices and duties of life, both civil and religious, with usefulness and reputation." Let me amend this by inserting the words "and women," for distinction has been no monopoly of one sex. The record of St. John's alumni is an impressive one, which has filled me with admiration and gratification. Without ever having majored in anything at St. John's, they have been admitted to outstanding law schools, medical schools, and graduate schools. Their careers and vocations have been varied and rewarding: professors and teachers, librarians and social workers, lawyers and physicians, manufacturers and salesmen, editors and writers, administrators and government officials. The company is legion, and its members demonstrate in their careers and their daily lives the efficacy of the liberal arts—more particularly the approach to liberal education for which St. John's College stands. Let me conclude with one graduate's assessment of his education:

Study of the liberal arts in the St. John's fashion can develop in its graduate a large and liberal spirit. It is of the first importance that a college graduate be able to bring both a searching and a sympathetic viewpoint to the world around him. Both these elements are needed, for to search without sympathy is to get information without understanding, and to be sympathetic without searching could be to be maudlin instead of concerned. It has been my good fortune as a journalist to talk to many kinds of people, often at crucial and revealing

moments in their lives. A liberal outlook toward humanity which permits tolerance in an era of intolerance and an unfettered and inquisitive mind are satisfying gifts for which I am most grateful.

Members of the Class of 1983, I salute you. On behalf of the Board, the tutors, and the entire college community, I welcome you to St. John's College. I wish you well over the four years ahead. May they be as challenging and rewarding for each of you as have my thirty years of service in the St. John's presidency. I declare the College in session at the conclusion of the benediction.

Convocatum est.

AFTERWORD

In the spring of 1980 the seniors on both campuses asked that I give the commencement address at their graduation. As an afterword to my matriculation convocation addresses, I have included this address, which I made in my last appearance before the College at Annapolis and Santa Fe.

THE PRESIDENT GRADUATES

You, the members of the Class of 1980, honor me with your invitation to speak at your graduation this afternoon. As you and the tutors well know, this is not my accustomed role at a St. John's Commencement. Instead, it has been my prerogative to speak at the Matriculation Convocation each fall. For some thirty years I have carefully devised a new talk each year to convey the essential character of the College without repeating myself too much. When you came to me this spring with the request that I give the commencement address, I confess that I was deeply moved. At the same time I wondered whether I could formulate any thoughts that might be worthy of the occasion. Let me try. I hope that I will justify your confidence.

In a sense we are graduates together this Sunday in May. You have done better than I, for most of you have taken only four years to attain your degree. I, on the other hand, have been around this college for thirty-one years and am only now about to leave it. So, though I entered with the Class of 1953, I leave with the Class of 1980. I am proud to have been a member of both, and indeed a friend and associate of many St. Johnnies over three decades.

I shall begin by comparing and contrasting what each of you has gained through your experience at St. John's College with what I have gained through mine. First and foremost, you have read and discussed all or parts of some hundred thirty books, representing the western tradition which is our heritage—the Platonic dialogues, the *Elements* of Euclid, the Bible, Augustine's *Confessions*, Aquinas' *Summa Theologica*, Bacon's *Novum Organum*, Shakespeare's plays, Bach's *St. Matthew Passion*, Galileo's *Two New Sciences*, Rousseau's *Social Contract*, the Federalist Papers, Darwin's *Origin of Species*, Tocqueville's *Democracy in America*, Bohr's quantum hypothesis, Supreme Court opinions, Yeats' poems, and Dostoevski's *Brothers Karamazov*. I envy you this immersion in the St. John's program, for my reading has encompassed only a quarter of these volumes, principally the Greek authors. Necessarily, I have had to read reams of contemporary educational articles and government documents, hardly challenging fare for the mind. Yet I can report more rewarding reading in books like Mark Van Doren's *Liberal Education* and Lao Tzu's *Tao Te Ching*. I admire you for your accomplishment over these four undergraduate years.

In the second place, you have learned to listen—both in seminars and at Friday night lectures. This means that you have acquired the fine art of engaging in conversation rather than in confrontation. You have heard your fellow students and tutors at the seminar table expound opinions and hypotheses in conflict with your own and yet you have rendered them the courtesy of a hearing as free as possible from your own prejudices. You have followed the developing thesis of a lecturer and then engaged him or her in critical but friendly discussion during the question period. I too have learned to listen—to listen to Board members, to faculty members, to staff members, and to students. I have discovered that my own opinions or conclusions must often yield to the lucid and persuasive arguments of others. I have learned that presidential decisions should be reached only after hearing and weighing the evidence on both sides of an issue.

Each of you has now developed the liberal arts or skills of analyzing material, of synthesizing facts, of defining alternatives, and of arriving at decisions. Your work in the tutorials and in the laboratories, as well as your reading, has taught you to search for the rationale of a position or for the origin of a formula. You have

not been content to accept hypotheses or laws on the word of your tutor; instead you have brought to bear your thinking skills as tools of understanding. By contrast, I have had to rely upon such liberal arts as I brought with me from an earlier experience at a college in New England. My task has been to apply these liberal arts to the practical problems of making a college work, problems of enrollment, fund-raising, admissions, finance, and the like. My writing skills have been applied somewhat less to speeches and articles and more to annual reports and to persuasive letters to foundations and the beleaguered alumni of the College.

In philosophy you have explored together and with your tutors possible answers to abiding human questions with which the authors of the books have been concerned. You have contrasted Greek philosophy with Christian philosophy. You have been exposed to the rationalists and the sceptics. You have had an opportunity to subject their thinking and yours to criticism and question. Perhaps you will agree with me that this St. John's education of ours is essentially a philosophical enterprise. I trust that each of you has found some answers and some certainties, so that you are equipped to face the slings and arrows of outrageous fortune in the years ahead.

I already had a reasonably well-formulated philosophy of life when I arrived. My philosophical involvement here was largely in the field of education. What attracted me originally to St. John's College was the matter and the manner of the program. It seemed to me that St. John's provided much that my own education had neglected. There was a wholeness to it; it was not fragmented. There was full participation rather than somewhat passive exposure to great lecturers. Most important of all, there was a clear delineation of the liberal arts, which I had previously wrongly equated with subject matters like the humanities.

This brings me to the last point in comparing our experiences. If this college has succeeded with each of you over these four years, it has taught you to learn how to learn. Never should you be fearful of attempting some new subject matter. Your mind should be ready to tackle anything. Beyond that, St. John's should have taught you to learn for learning's own sake, to learn because learning is exciting and because it has its own rewards. Your experience here should make you want to go on with your learning, not necessarily in graduate school, though that is a real

possibility, but so that the rest of your life will be interesting and without surcease in learning.

My learning has had its formal aspects through attendance at lectures and concerts and through the privilege of leading an occasional seminar or preceptorial. I have come to have great respect for St. John's tutors and for their willingness to engage in study and conversation outside their fields of expertise. For me there has been a great opportunity to learn from both the faculty members and the students. In turn, I have sought to spread the gospel according to St. John's through my chairmanship of the Association of American Colleges and through the Pugwash seminars in liberal education conducted in Nova Scotia over several summers for college presidents and deans. St. John's has generated in me the evangelistic fervor of an educational missionary.

Let me offer now some observations upon your graduation. Perhaps some of my experience you may find applicable to your own individual situations. I suggest three points for your consideration.

First, whether you realize it or not, a change has taken place in each of you over these past four years. I admit that it may be difficult, if not impossible, for you to recognize this change. Your tutors, I know, and your parents, I suspect, can be better judges of what has happened to you than you yourself. You are a different person from the young man or young woman who signed the College Register. You know at first hand, and not by some kind of midwifery, your western heritage. You have acquired a breadth of knowledge which will always stand you in good stead. You know that there are relationships among the various fields of knowledge and that there is an essential unity among them. You have acquired in greater or less measure the liberating arts or skills which are your tools of understanding. You will find them of enormous help as you seek to solve unexpected problems and difficulties in the years ahead. Finally, you have learned to live with other people; you have learned, if not to love them, at least to establish a *modus vivendi*. I say this with full knowledge that at least some of you will welcome release from a seminar or a tutorial where you have been impatient with the idiosyncracies of one or more of your fellow students.

My second observation has to do with your uncertainty and doubt as to what lies ahead of you in life. Fortunate are those few

who know with clarity and purpose the next steps in their careers. Many of you have already been admitted to graduate schools. Others of you will be working to pay off loans, to "find yourselves," and to decide what comes next. Perhaps my own experience will offer some measure of encouragement, or at least of consolation. It is a demonstration of the absence of clear direction and of the helpfulness of fortuitous developments. In college I majored in mathematics, because it was easy for me. As a senior I shifted to English, because it was the only other subject in which I had enough credits to graduate. Teaching elementary English in China for two years satisfied my urge for adventure and at the same time provided an opportunity to try teaching. A year in divinity school proved that I could not become a minister without a clear call to that vocation, but it did expose me to the Bible, to church history, and to religious philosophy. Rational deliberation then determined me to teach and dictated graduate study in history. An able professor steered me into American diplomatic history. After three years of college teaching, World War II sent me to Chinese language school and then to the Far East for active service in the China-Burma-India Theater of Operations. This experience in turn propelled me into the Far Eastern Office of the Department of State, and there the Board of Visitors and Governors of St. John's College found me in 1949. It was sheer good fortune that my background included Greek, German, and French, mathematics and philosophy, diplomacy and fund-raising, and experience in teaching and administration. Had I set out to be President of St. John's College in 1931, I should never have made it. My point is simply that you can surmount unpromising starts and that you should make the most of your opportunities, for each bit of experience may in some unexpected way contribute to a greater opportunity in the future.

My third and final observation has to do with your outlook on life after these four chrysalis years at St. John's College. Each of you brought to this institution a set of beliefs which you inherited from your parents, acquired in church or synagogue, or learned from your earlier education. As you leave this college, I hope that you have examined your beliefs and developed for yourself a philosophy which will stand you in good stead throughout the balance of your life. Each of you should be able to say, as Luther did, "This I believe." In my own case, I hold to the Christian position, the

fatherhood of a loving God, the redeeming grace of His Son, and the brotherhood of man. In my actions I have tried, not always with success, to be true to this position.

Each of you has had the freedom to choose but each of you must make a choice. You cannot remain in limbo, with a life that is uncommitted. I hope that your philosophy of life provides you with the impulse to serve, to undertake careers and professions useful to your fellow men and women, and to contribute as concerned citizens to your community and to your nation. This may be through political office or by participation in civic organizations. I might add that I hope at least some of you will become tycoons in the business world, for your college is always going to need those who can contribute substantially to its resources!

I would remind you of the allegory of Plato's cave. It is not enough that you be turned about by your St. John's education to see and strive for the Good, the True, and the Beautiful. You must return to the cave to work there with your fellow citizens. You must help them to see the light so that they themselves become turned about and no longer pursue shadows and echoes.

I hope that you will hold to three commitments for the future. The first of these is commitment to principle. You have read many books and have discussed many theories. You are acquainted at first hand with the virtues. You are not unfamiliar with justice, with honesty, and with the fundamental tenets of government. The time is now here when you must put theory into practice. Otherwise your education will have been of little value.

Your second commitment, I hope, will be to liberal education. This means that you must continue to be intellectually alive, that you make wise use of leisure in reading good books, in attending good lectures and concerts, and in carrying on meaningful conversations. Your education at St. John's should have provided the stimulus to go on with your learning even under the difficult circumstances of the marketplace.

Finally, I hope that you will cherish a commitment to this college. It will be normal for most of you to turn your attention to graduate schools, to marriage and family, and to your new vocation, whatever it may be. I trust that you will not forget that you remain members of the St. John's community, for this community is not limited by geographical location or fixed periods of time. You have an opportunity and an obligation to make a St. John's educa-

tion possible for future generations of young men and women by guiding prospective students here, by contributing of your time and substance to the College, even if it be the widow's mite, and by exemplifying in your own lives what the books and the tutors at St. John's College have meant to you. I suspect that you and I have a devotion and a loyalty to this place from which we can never willingly escape. It has changed my life. I am sure it has changed yours.

Hail and farewell!

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It seemed inappropriate in a collection of addresses to document citations with footnotes. Instead it appeared to be helpful to the reader to have appended to this volume an alphabetical list of the various works from which quotations have been drawn. Classics, more recent books and articles, and St. John's College publications are all included.

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- p. 10. Arrival of Women - by M.E. Warren
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- p. 53. Santa Fe Campus Plan,
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